

VOL. LXXI

OCTOBER 1966

Prabuddha Bharata

OR
AWAKENED INDIA



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Editorial Office
MAYAVATI, ALMORA
HIMALAYAS

Publication Office
5 DEHI ENTALLY ROAD
CALCUTTA 14

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

OCTOBER 1966

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER

(started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896)

Annual Subscription: India, Burma, and Ceylon, Rupees Six :

Foreign, Fourteen Shillings ; U.S.A., Four Dollars.

(Only Annual Subscriptions are accepted)

Single Copy: Inland, Sixty paise

:—: Packing and delivery free

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DT. ALMORA, U.P.

Prabuddha Bharata, having a wide circulation all over India, Ceylon, U.S.A., Europe, etc., is an excellent medium of advertisement. Rates are as follows:—

Per insertion ordinary full page Rs. 100

" " " half " Rs. 60

Rates for coverpages & special positions are quoted on request.

All Business communications should be addressed to—

THE MANAGER

ADVAITA ASHRAMA : : 5 Dehi Entally Road : : Calcutta 14

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Vol. LXXI

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No. 10



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:0:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(107)

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Mylapore, Madras
14 October, 1921

Dear Sriman —,

Maharaj and I convey our Vijayā blessings to you. I have learnt all from your letter here. But you have not detailed anything as to how you are keeping and it ought to have been there.

This is for the first time in the South that Divine Mother Durgā has been worshipped in image at the Master's Madras Math. The image had to be brought in from Calcutta by rail and by the Mother's grace it arrived intact; there had been no damage or anything. The worship, too, was performed with all solemnity, devotion and precision. Great had been the joy and enthusiasm.

You are an all renouncing monk and they are householders; so you should never have become displeased with them. It appears that you have not been able to establish yourself upon true renunciation and saintliness as yet. They are householders, and all their faults are to be forgiven. But you are one who would have renunciation as his ideal and who has taken refuge in the Master, the Holy Mother and in us. Compassion and forgiveness are the virtues which should be natural to you; otherwise you cannot enter into the domain of the Master. Write to them with all love and look to the Master's work by going over there.

What to write more? Our heartfelt blessings are always with you. All of us, including Maharaj, are keeping fairly well. Bangalore is quite cool

and the water too is very health-giving. I pray for your perfect well-being. Never be indifferent about the centre, and write sharp about you. Drop a letter after you have returned there and revived the relation of love with the devotees again.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(108)

Sri Ramakrishna Math
Bhubaneswar, Puri
1 December 1921

Dear Sriman—,

Your letter of 14.11 reached me duly at Madras. We left Madras on the 19th and arrived at this centre on 21st. It is delighting to learn that you are all well; also it is heartening to know that, by the Master's grace, you have the easy availability of alms too. Now dive deep with the spiritual practices and pray for the Master's grace with all earnestness. May He give you the strength to move towards Him. One is sure to attain His mercy only if one can hold on to His feet. 'Anything connected with the great is also good'—so goes the saying. Who else is there to be deemed as more gracious than our Master? You have taken refuge in Him, so there is nothing to worry about any further. Know for certain that He is looking after you; in all the circumstances He stands behind you.

We send our heartfelt love and blessings to you all. We would probably be reaching Calcutta by the next two weeks. In regard to health we are doing somewhat well.

Meerut is a health-giving place and, by the Master's grace there has been good arrangement of food and shelter. Now forge ahead with the spiritual pursuit. Nights, nowadays, are comparatively much longer; so get up at 3 A.M. daily and have the regular spiritual practices. For spiritual pursuits that is the time most congenial of all. The period just before the dawn is always very favourable for spiritual practices. You need not feel anything for your not writing to me so often. Go on with your own mission.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

NEW HORIZON IN NATIONAL HERITAGE

[EDITORIAL]

Meaning of National Progress: Progress of any sort is the consciousness of that progress. Everybody must attain it by the sweat of his brow. The transformation of the medium 'one lives in' only takes place in proportion as one merits it; and one can only merit it by struggle and by the wisdom gained thereof. But if this wisdom is the principal thing then there is necessarily a further thing, not only life, but the inspiration which keeps the life going. The wages of going-on are the daily currency of mere existence, but the drive, the dynamism, the gusto which is necessary to bring life to its highest is not found in the day to day drawings from the ordinary resources of mere living. One must have the inspiration to go on in one's struggle; one is required to have the gusto to acquire the necessary wisdom and finally there must be the courage to put the wisdom thus gained into one's best advantage. It is this virtue of courage which is to be engendered and developed; without it nothing can be attempted and certainly nothing will be accomplished. And what is true of an individual is true of a nation. Great creations, great discoveries are always nurtured in hardships of struggle, pondered in sorrow and established with difficulty. Deep rooted are the struggles which a nation has to face in its progress from the clogging slime to sublimity and for all these there must always be a true vision of history, a real grasp over the heritage.

The word 'people' is not any fraction but the *ensamble* of all the individuals associated to form a fraternity indicating a common aim and this aim is, in fact, the sole sovereign. Every nation, therefore, has its

own aim which is its insignia, its baptism, the sign of its legitimacy that must be fulfilled. The secret of this aim cannot be discovered by any system of suffrage unless such system is based upon the anterior acceptance of some ruling moral principle—a principle so harmonizing the religious and historical tradition of the nation with the intuitions of individual conscience as to become the informing spirit of the whole epoch of national development. The nation that neglects this aim betrays its mission, undergoes a period of expiation proportionate to its error or negligence. Such expiations become obvious in history since a nation, like every big organization, has the inertia that tends to be in the direction of avoidance of change and the inhibition of the unfamiliar. Hence is the necessity of the alteration in leadership, in government, in political, philosophical and economic studies, that can see the familiar from the new angles. Every epoch of national progress therefore reveals a new idea involving a new process of education where the philosophy prepares the way for the discovery, the religion sanctifies the new idea by elevating it into a sacred duty, art symbolizes it for the general people, political system translates it gradually into facts and for all these history provides the much needed vision and courage. This vision of history is like the sixth sense of a nation—a capacity that can 'see the wood' as distinct from the 'trees' which constitute it—a faculty of courage and determination that can emphatically disprove all comfortable beliefs and idle superstitions standing in the way of the progress of the nation. This is the master-key to enter in-

to the high watch-tower of the past wherefrom men of real achievements look out upon the nation's distant future with hope and optimism. For any nation the age which reveals such new epoch, is the golden age, the men who symbolize the aspirations of the age, are national characters who by their words and deeds make new gospels of national regeneration.

National Perspectives of Nineteenth Century: Nineteenth century India is, perhaps, that new epoch, a great turning point in Indian national history which is sure to be reckoned with by the future social historians. In quizzical wit, eruptions of boisterous dexterity, admiration of physical daring, the flaming emotions to see the facts, the dispassionate analysis of the tragedies and comedies of national life, the revolutionary synthesis and harmony, it was the superb and astonishing culmination of many centuries. Since the Buddhist era had dwindled with an agonizing aftermath, the thought world of the country was turned into so many icebergs, cold and aloof drifting apart. There was no unified vision, no common continent of comradeship. The nearest mind remained the deepest mystery and there was no dedicated effort to ascertain the future. From the Mahomedan period onwards we, like the legendary selfish giant, started erecting high walls of seclusion round our garden to keep away people and accepted no invitation from others to visit other garden too. On the other hand, we wanted others to honour our privacy. Not that we lacked in any historical wisdom; history-mindedness was nothing new from the days of Alberuni, Huen Tsang or Cāṇakya (fourth century B.C.), one has only to think of the Maurya empire (323-188 B.C.), the Gupta empire (A.D. 320-550), and the Cālukya empire (A.D. 550-753) to convince oneself of the Indian political

wisdom. Only we had made philosophy and history to mean the same. As a result when we met with the Europeans during nineteenth century we felt outwitted in many respects. Europe presented new interpretations of history with which we had never been familiar. So long we had been accustomed to the doctrines like those of Moore who said, 'Good manners never can intrude' but here we met with Massingers who could find profitable to aver, 'You must practise the manners of the time, if you intend to have favour from it!' A stir came and a search was evidently made. But the new vision is not so easy to acquire. The field of progress is always furrowed by errors and failures. The courage of adventure has never been the endowment of luck. Wisdom of history is not that individual faith which creates martyrs, but it is that social consciousness which instils into the multitudes a faith in a destiny that makes for all victory. Struggles of the century were thus for a new breathing, an experiment with a new awareness, a restoration of the true vision and a return to the robust understanding of history.

Changing Interpretations of History: Hitherto the way of looking to the history was ancient. But with the growth of technical virtuosity and the scientific knowledge that mankind had to live together in a confined planet, thoughts ranged once again about the nature of God. A new politico-scientific rigmarole began to gain ground all over Europe. Mathematicians claimed they could explain everything without postulating the existence of God, biologists came forward to justify the differentiation of species and the growth of man in strictly biological terms. Reason was enthroned in place of God, the clichés and platitudes were given up, and people began asking themselves one another whether the men of Religion in the

past had done their best towards shaping the destiny of the mankind. The new conclusions were so revolutionary that the Philosophers, too, began to imitate the approach of the natural scientists in their work. Idealists had so long maintained that reality was a single and systematic entity reflecting itself in the social and historical changes; the new exponents held that it was, much as it appeared to be science, a vast plurality of different things of different kinds—physical, mental and conceptual. The new belief was thus an attempt towards a new systematization which had its inevitable nihilistic implications on the approach to history, religion and morality. The mental world of Europe became reverberated with the new rebel thought which could have its echo in the Logical Positivism of Russell and G. E. Moore in England, in the scepticism of Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and Bonhoeffer in Germany and in the down-to-the-earth thinking of Camus, Paul Sartre in France, Dostoevsky in Russia. Need of a new look towards history suitable to the bewildering, frustrating, frightening, but nevertheless tremendous age was keenly felt and the new interpretations came into being. But all these were not without any cause. Since the days of Christianity there had been much worrying about religion and philosophy, much time was taken in fighting crusades and much concessions were made to the sects and schisms in the name of God. The new rebellion in thinking was therefore a desperate bid to shake off the mountain high heaps of delusions and superstitions accumulated from the days of the Roman supremacy. In fact such rebel thoughts are necessary too for every age to measure the size of the soul; Christ, Mohammed, Buddha all started as rebels. In the wake of these developments study of history, too, came to be viewed in different ways

ultimately giving rise to the Mechanistic and the Biological interpretations. But history is not philosophy; nor is it a study of the natural sciences whose aim is to analyse and examine. The purpose of history is to generalize and comprehend and any such new generalization must establish itself through the test of time. In that sense all the different views appear to suffer from the records of their past failures.

Analysing in greater details ancient view of history is a backward gaze, a long cry of grief, rejecting all innovation and despising everything new. To this view the past is always golden and the present is always leaden. It is neither willing to be flamboyant nor able to be melodramatic. Unlike the mechanistic approach that has rebelled against the past and, smiling in bitterness, has proclaimed the reign of darkness by accepting scepticism, incredulity as things inevitable, the ancient look is a hymn of resignation where more serious failures are taken for granted philosophically, where awkward questions seldom embarrass the leadership. It is proud to have no truck with the new conclusions as 'man evolved out of anthropoid' or 'the earth spins around the sun' for their not being sufficient enough to make man change his mode of life but it fails to provide a satisfactory rapport between what is ideal and what is actual. While the progenitors of Mechanistic interpretation are too optimistic about their postulates, the views of the Biological approach are too fantastic to be accepted by all. Intellectuals nourished in mechanistic thoughts steep in Newton and Spencer and with their parapsychology, mescaline and phenomenon of poltergeists sneer at what could not be explained in terms of mathematics. In the past they served Caesars to rouse Rome to burn down civilizations from Atlas mountain to Nile, from the Hibernian peninsula to Mesopotamia and from Mt. Sinai to the coasts

of Scotland. The philosophers and poets of Greece, the scholars and prophets of Israel, the architects of Egypt, the craftsmen of Carthage all perished, like Archimedes, before their path.

The race anthropologists and the champions of the Biological views, on the other hand, have brought in Darwinians and neo-Darwinians to denounce what is traditional, divided the humanity into White, Black and Yellow races and reduced the better hearts and the finer heads into serfs and slaves. They taught Europe to serve not the silent Christ but the noisy overlords and crafty churchmen who would brand the Asians and Africans as malodorous, malevolent, insidious heathens to justify their schemes of exploitation and despotism. With Hobbes, Machiavelli and Croce they ignore the ancient wisdoms, be those of Pericles of Athens or the judges of Israel. The voices of men like Rousseau, Whitehead and Schopenhauer are of no avail against them.

On the interpretations of history the world has always been divided between different conflicting views. Each is paradoxically defiant and intolerant of the other in deriving its own version. If one has been responsible for the horrors of 'Inquisitions', and the 'Crusades', the other has incited Nazism, Fascism, Colonialism and brought in the world wars. If one has sent Galileo to derision and burnt down Joan of Arc for new thinking, the other has been responsible for the concentration camps, and the new expansionism. If one still broods over the regain of some lost ancient paradise or a golden age that can never be recreated, the other dreams of a new world where there is no place for God. Confused and confounded by such thoughts and views of the West, Indian mind, thus, faced a new hurdle and began to oscillate between the utopianism of the ancients and the scientific gullibility of the moderners. The fact of

unrest has quite vividly been epitomized in the following words of Swami Vivekananda: 'When the western conquerors, sword in hand, came to demonstrate to the children of the sages that they were barbarians, a race of dreamers, that their religion was but mythology and God and Soul and everything they had been struggling for were mere words without meaning, that the thousands of years of struggle, the thousands of years of endless renunciation had all been in vain, the question began to be agitated among the young men at the universities whether the whole national existence upto then had been a failure, whether they must begin anew on the occidental plan, tear up their old books, burn their philosophies, drive away their preachers and break down their temples.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 158)

By having a long past India could have a long history too. She had witnessed the rise and fall of many civilizations, many races and many doctrines. She could, therefore, visualize and verify that a crime in history would not be less meaningful, because it had happened generations ago. Evil is no less pronounced, because distant nations or remote ancestors suffered its effect; tyranny can never be justified, because it succeeded in its attempt. She, on the other hand, knew that goodness and nobility could never be trifled with because they failed for sometime in the past. After all man is the hero of history and he ought to have a *raison d'être* of the historical events. This search after the *raison d'être* has endowed India with a vision of wholeness through which all history has been studied in its totality, all problems have been viewed as spiritual disequilibriums. Since the image of man is fundamentally the same everywhere, his problems, too, are intrinsically the same; and in this emphasis Indian history is not the exclusive one. There is no 'Eastern' or 'Western' among

the nations or countries that can produce a St. Francis of Assisi, a St. John of the Cross, a Pascal or a John Bunyan. Taoism and Zen Buddhism are not the less spiritual in any way. History of Byzantine Christianity, works of Tolstoy, Bardyev, Nicolai Hartmann speak in the same strain. Śaṅkara asserts that man is the highest of all the sentient beings; the *Bhāgavata* says: Rare is the human birth; Buddha declares: It is difficult to achieve human birth and attain Buddha-hood; Spinoza considers nature to be God; Hegelianism upholds: It is the spirit that is real; Christ says: 'Blessed are the peace makers'; and the Roman philosopher Plotinus signifies: 'Our aim is ... to be what God is.' This *raison d'être* is the soul of all history. The body may change but the soul continues to live. Decadence of nations is a necessary evil, a part of the continually recurring rhythm making periodic crisis in the history of man. A rebirth of an individual soul in animal form is a figure of speech for rebirth with animal qualities; so the degeneration of a nation is its degradation into a low level of intelligence that embellishes crime and error by sophism, teaches indifference to the national heritage, encourages mute contemplation in philosophy or incites the lust for the external in art and literature. Every new epoch, therefore, has to evolve a new education for the national mind, a new thinking towards the pronouncement of a new principle for the accomplishment of the new evolution. True leadership of a nation is that educated intelligence, that reborn sense of the people consecrated to the task of carrying out the new principle in the sphere of facts. It is a new order but not certainly divorced from the old. Changes there must be but new ideas of change do not come from a vacuum; nor they are to be thought of or examined in a vacuum. The popular temptation to ignore centuries

of history as mere antiquarianism or to redefine the past to suit one's own way is historically irrational, philosophically impossible and intellectually ridiculous. To understand our 'today' we must fall back upon the 'yesterday'. Prof. H. G. Creel of the University of Chicago says in a recent remark about China: 'To understand China, one must start at least as early as Confucius. ... One must think of the great thinkers, because they have played a principal part in making China what she is ... One must know something about China's traditional thought even to understand Chinese communist theory.' (News release on *Creel's Chinese Thought*, New American Library, New York, 1966) 'The old order changeth' but it does not just die out or wishing so will never make it die out. Bernard Shaw once said: 'Shakespeare was taller than I am but I am standing on his shoulders.' So, if the past is disowned altogether on whose shoulder shall we stand in future? Yet any exclusive preponderance on the traditional ideas without any heed to the contemporary perspective is sure to make the conclusions unacceptable. To think of the past as mere sacred past, the unexaminable past or unchangeable past is all the more unphilosophical as well as unhistorical. (Vide Charles Moore: 'The Old and the New in Philosophy', *The Aryan Path*, May, 66, pp. 200 and 202)

The world is ever changing and with it the history too. It is the human mind that changes history and not the *vice versa*. The problem of history therefore is the problem of finding a rapport between the new winds of change and the past traditions. This problem of identifying the will of the individual with the aspirations of the nation, finding useful link between the nation and the world outside its limited ambit is quite inherent in human thinking and it has bedevilled many thinkers.

It is this problem that made Dante pronounce notes of warning in his *Demonarchia* seven hundred years ago,—‘O humanity, you are ailing both in your intellectual powers, as well as in your heart!’ For this the great French historian Jules Michelot of the eighteenth century asked the world to accept the Vedas as the Bible of humanity; Victor Hugo pleaded for human unity; Voltaire in the seventeenth century urged Europe to stop thinking in terms of the Mediterranean only. And the same problem again led Swami Vivekananda to say about India in 1894,—‘The fact of our isolation from all other nations of the world is the cause of our degeneration and its only remedy is getting back into the current of the rest of the world.’ (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 325)

The New Historical Vision: Such was, therefore, the period of brooding uncertainty that had been prevailing in Indian history when, in the meanwhile, the mighty storm was gathering in silence. How to reconcile between the two extremes? was the pertinent question. But Indian heritage had still the ‘iron in its soul’; the first visible reaction started in the spiritual layer. The first thinker who could sense the incoming change was Raja Rammohan Roy (1774). The time he was born, was a period of lull, an uncanny calm arising out of a helpless self-surrender but the mastermind took it to be a lull persisting between two storms—the storm of doubt that had already been raging and the storm of regeneration that was not far off. By the advent of Swami Dayananda in 1824 a new powerful movement was started in western India, Brahmo Samaj came into being in 1828, leaders of great historical foresight and spiritual acumen like Devendra Nath Tagore (1817), Keshav Chandra Sen (1838) came into being one after the other. The radical school, on the

other side, stood up for a complete show down and a break with the past was imminent. To accentuate the crisis further English education was officially instituted in India in 1835. What the nation needed at the time was not a compromise between two views but a harmonized synthesis—a third product which would be verifiable and demonstrable in national life, which would not merely tolerate the new but would accept it, assimilate it. The need was therefore of a mighty mind who was capable enough to articulate the starved aspirations of the entire masses by initiating an effective dialogue between the East and the West. With the advent of Sri Ramakrishna in 1836, therefore, Indian history turned into a decisive and significant phase. In the words of Romain Rolland, his life was the fulfilment of the spiritual aspirations of the three hundred million people for the last two thousand years. So the much needed dialogue between the East and the West was begun to explore new possibilities, to foresee a new future for both the hemispheres of the earth. The meeting between Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda was in fact the meeting of the East and the West and it marked the beginning of that necessary dialogue. But what was the historical outcome of the significant meeting between the two giant minds of the age? Indeed the outcome was of a far reaching consequence and dramatic. Narendranath, who was, to borrow the words of a contemporary celebrity like Dr. Brojendranath Seal, a ‘free thinker’ a ‘tamer of souls’, a ‘dominant intelligence’ of the time became more Indian than before—he was transformed into Swami Vivekananda. To echo the words of the same great ‘Hegelian’, Dr. Seal, this transformation was ‘supernatural mysticism’ that ‘could scarcely be read at the time by the Philosophy of Pure Reason’.

From out of the turmoil of the century a new vision emerged, a new awakening dawned upon the horizon of national heritage. Literary reflections of Poet Tagore, the political wisdom of Mahatma Gandhi, Tilak and Nehru are all surcharged by that awakened spirit. To both Whitehead and the German historian Leopold Ranke European philosophy is 'a series of footnotes to Plato'. In that sense all twentieth century national movements and efforts are but direct or indirect attempts to elaborate that legacy of the great immediate past. For the first

time in the history of the world harmony of religions appeared to be an active gospel and was preached by a personality in the order of Swami Vivekananda in the citadels of western culture and for the first time in Indian history the religion and philosophy were viewed from a modern historical background and successfully geared to the movement of the time. The traditions of this great century, therefore, look down upon us, ask us to make our history a heritage of the entire people, a movement of the entire nation. Should we not be worthy of them?

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF ADVAITA

DR. SUDHINDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTI

Since thought and will act and react upon each other every system of thought has necessarily a practical side related to its theoretical teaching. To sever thought from will, to dissociate theory from practice is to indulge in abstraction. No true philosophy can entirely dispense with either. In India philosophers have always kept their theory in close touch with life. The ethical enquiries of Indian people have as a rule been based upon the metaphysical views to which they have subscribed. The closeness of the relation between Ethics and Metaphysics has nowhere been more stressed than in the works of the Advaitins whose philosophical speculations have to a great extent determined the course of moral life in India. The object of the present paper is to bring out the ethical implication of the Advaita and indicate the nature of the Advaitic discipline.

Unlike other metaphysical doctrines believing in the ultimacy of one or all of the three commonly accepted categories,

viz., God, soul and world, the monistic metaphysics of Advaita teaches that all of them are appearances in a fourth transcendental entity called Brahman. Brahman is one without a second. It is pure, undifferentiated, unobjective, self-luminous, eternal consciousness. The empirical objects which appear as real and true are but seeming diversifications of Brahman, the sole reality. The principle that accounts for the appearance of the *one* as many is *Māyā*. Viewed from the cosmic standpoint *Māyā* is the source as well as the sustaining cause of the external world. The Advaitins recognize another feature of *Māyā* which has a close bearing on their ethical views. Looked at from the individual point of view *Māyā* is a power of ignorance under whose influence each individual self identifies itself with a feeling of the 'I' and separates itself from similar other selves and the external world. Deluded by *Māyā* the individual self associates itself with a finite body and a finite

mind (*antaḥkāraṇa*) and regards itself as a person responsible for his conduct. The intrinsic nature of the soul as Infinite, Pure *Existence-Consciousness-Bliss* being obscured through ignorance it behaves like a finite, limited, miserable being. So long as the belief in its finitude and separateness continues, it remains in the state of bondage. According to the Advaitins liberation is nothing but the removal of this wrong belief. Whoever sees through the illusion and realizes his unity with Brahman attains the final aim of life, viz., salvation. Before realizing this unity a man cannot ignore the concepts of right and wrong and these constitute the basis of the science of Ethics. An action which leads him to the realization of his unity with Brahman, is right; while an action which directly or indirectly hampers such realization is wrong. According to this criterion such actions as truthfulness, charity, benevolence and self-control are good whereas falsehood, selfishness, injury to others and the like are bad. The validity of the moral distinction like that of all other distinctions is, however, relative and not absolute, for the Advaitins identify the highest good with the Absolute reality which is devoid of all distinctions.

The distinction between the *vyāvahārika* (empirical) and the *pāramārthika* (absolute) which the Advaitins make in Metaphysics has a far-reaching effect on their Ethics. For one who has realized Brahman, the *pāramārthika* reality, actions, whether right or wrong, have no meaning at all. But to the man who is on the *vyāvahārika* plane his actions are morally significant. He is, therefore, asked to perform his duties according to his caste and station in life. Nevertheless it is urged that he should not forget that the internal organ, the body and the senses which constitute his adjuncts as well as the physical world which forms his objective environ-

ment, lack the highest grade of reality, because they are the effects of *Māyā*. The consequences that follow from the deluding influence of *Māyā* on an individual are the obscuration of the ultimate reality from him, the rise of the feeling of egoism in him and the appearance of an environment, physical as well as social, to him. Neither the first nor the third of these consequences can be regarded as the direct cause of man's being subject to the vicissitudes of life. The hopes and fears of life cannot be legitimately assigned to *Māyā* in its aspect of veiling the ultimate truth, for in sleep which is admittedly a case of the obscuration of the ultimate truth a man transcends them, though only for the time being. What prevents one from tracing them to *Māyā* in its aspect of giving rise to the environment is the fact that the environment raises no hope, causes no fear and occasions no error or confusion in deep sleep, although it cannot be said to have passed out of existence then, its existence being vouched for by those who are awake. The Advaitins regard *Māyā* in its aspect of giving rise to *antaḥkāraṇa* which accounts for a man's wrong belief in his finitude and separateness, as the direct cause of the hopes and fears of life. The *antaḥkāraṇa* continues to operate in normal waking experience but in deep sleep it temporarily merges in its source from which it rises again with the idea of *Ahaṁ* or ego. It is the feeling of egoism that fetters a man by developing likes and dislikes for a limited portion of the reality and causing indifference towards the rest of existence. The ego or the narrow 'I' is the source of all evil. Narrow selfishness is another name for bondage. He who desires to free himself from the yoke of the ego and its petty likes and dislikes should rise above selfishness by renouncing all private or personal interests. The reality of the ego is *vyāvahārika* or empirical. The ego is

not the real self but is only an apparent limitation of Brahman, the true Self which is self-luminous, infinite consciousness. The Upaniṣads have declared that the real self is beyond the good and evil of worldly life. The famous analogy of the two birds implies that unlike the ego which enjoys the fruits of worldly experience, the self only looks on them. The ego is but the lower self which should not be ranked and harmonized with the higher or the transcendental self. Ignorance with regard to the true nature of the self is the cause of bondage. It is through knowledge of the self that ignorance is finally overcome. The use of the ego is recommended in the *vyāvahārika* state only as a means to the final enlightenment which brings about its end.

The highest good consists in self-knowledge, and the path to it is different from the path that leads to transitory pleasures of life. One cannot attain it without repressing one's desires and appetites which drag one to the pleasures and pains of mundane life. The Upaniṣads abound in passages which refer to the method of self-conquest through self-denial. Though liberation from bondage results the moment the intuitive knowledge of one's identity with Brahman is gained, yet ethical discipline and moral perfection are necessary, because the revelation of true knowledge is restricted to the morally pure. The Advaitins believe in the possibility of *jīvanmukti* which means the attainment of liberation while still in life. In his *Jīvanmukti-viveka* Śaṅkara has pointed out that the real state of liberation cannot be attained until and unless the *vāsanās* or root-impressions are burnt and the *citta* or mind is totally destroyed. Continual self-persuasion regarding the unreality of the world and the reality of the self and watchfulness about one's own moral defects are necessary for effecting the dissolution of the mind. The

mind cannot be arrested all at once. The stages of advancement through which the calm of mind is ultimately reached are (1) *śubhecchā* or desire to follow the right path, (2) *vicāraṇā* or discrimination between the reality and the appearances, (3) *tanumānasa* or the tendency of the empirical consciousness to go away from its ordinary course and to change its natural occupation, (4) *sattāpatti* or the attainment of the knowledge of Being or Identity, (5) *asamsakti* or freedom from all attachment to the flesh and desires pertaining to it, (6) *padārthabhāvanā* or the sole consciousness of Brahman, the pure identity and (7) *turyagā* or complete absorption of the mind in the consciousness of the self. The seventh stage is the last stage from which there is no return to the life of empiric consciousness.

The Advaitins prescribe the study of the Vedānta for the attainment of right knowledge which consists in the intuitive realization of one's identity with Brahman. As the study of the Vedānta fails to produce the desired result in an impure mind some ethical discipline has to be undergone for the cultivation of detachment before entering upon such study. The performance of sacrifices to gods in accordance with the teachings of the Mīmāṃsā which presupposes the reality of distinction forms no part of the Vedāntic discipline which is practised to prepare the mind for the reception of the monistic truth. The qualifications that make one a fit student of Vedānta are: (1) ability to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal (*nityānityavastuvivekaḥ*), (2) freedom from desire for enjoyment of objects here or elsewhere (*ihāmutrāphalabhogavirāgaḥ*), (3) attainment of such qualities as detachment, patience, power of concentration (*śamādiṣaṭkaśampattiḥ*) and an ardent desire for liberation

(*mumukṣutvam*). While fully recognizing the value of the preparatory discipline as a means of reaching the negative ideal of self-denial the Advaitins do not stop short with it, for the ideal of life aimed at by them is the positive ideal of self-affirmation. A further discipline consisting of *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* is needed for the attainment of this positive aim. A duly qualified student should study and discuss the Vedāntic texts with the assistance of a teacher who has himself realized the truths of the Vedānta. Such study of the Vedānta under a proper *guru* is called *śravaṇa*, which though necessary, is not enough. *Śravaṇa* should be supplemented by *manana* which means continued reflection upon the truths learnt through *śravaṇa* until all doubts are removed and intellectual conviction is generated about them. The main object of *manana* is to remove any doubt that may arise (*asambhāvanā*) with regard to the Vedāntic truths received on trust. No doubt *manana* secures intellectual conviction by removing all doubts but it cannot cope with the obstacles caused by the unconscious reassertion of such old habits of thought as are incompatible with the truths of Vedānta (*viparīta bhāvanā*). *Nididhyāsana* or continued meditation on the central point of Vedāntic teaching, viz., the identity between the individual self and Brahman, is meant to overcome such obstacles.

Two ethical lessons are deducible from the conception of *Māyā* which forms the pivotal point of Advaita not only on its theoretical but also on its practical side. The first of these two lessons stresses the need for self-denial and is negative, the second recognizes the importance of self-assertion and is positive. It is the narrow or egoistic self that is to be denied and it is the universal Self that is to be affirmed in its place. *Māyā* or *Avidyā* obstructs man's vision of truth and creates a narrow

outlook by confining his personality to petty desires and egoistic impulses. Under the influence of *Avidyā* man takes himself to be a finite narrow self. In fact he is the universal Self hidden behind a finite name and form. This truth has been taught in the Upaniṣadic formula 'That thou art' (*Tat tvam asi*). The Advaitins insist on the grasping of this wider significance of the self since in their view it forms the positive aim of life. Mere intellectual acceptance of the truth that the individual soul is identical with the universal Soul is not enough. What is needed is ratification of the truth by one's own experience. To 'grasp' the truth means to have it realized in one's experience so that one's conduct in everyday life becomes influenced by it. It is, however, only a very few that can grasp the truth in this sense. The majority who fail to grasp it and feel themselves unfit to strive for it should not be left in the dark. In order that they may live a morally worthy life it is necessary to bring out the implication of the formula and show the direct bearing of its truth on their ethical conduct. Since every individual self is identical with Brahman, one self cannot be different from another. Brahman being the sole reality and everyone being at bottom the same as Brahman there is no rational basis for any discrimination in one's attitude and behaviour towards others. One should feel equally for all; one should bear the same love for all. It is this cultivation of equal love for all that constitutes the positive lesson of Advaitic Ethics. One special feature of the love whose cultivation the Advaitins recommend is the width of its range. Instead of limiting it to mankind, the Advaitins extend it to the whole of sentient creation, for they share the common Indian belief that not only man but other living beings also possess souls, though all souls have not attained the same degree of

spiritual perfection. If the Advaita asks man to love his neighbour, it really asks him to love every living being, since every living being is his neighbour. The cultivation of such love banishes the attitude of hatred towards others and cures one of indifference which eventually rests on some egoistic consideration. Love in this extended form, though common to most of the Indian systems, is hardly known in the West. There is another striking feature of the Advaitic conception of love which marks it off not only from Western thoughts but also from other Indian doctrines. By true love the Advaitins do not mean the so called feeling which one bears towards another, nor do they regard love as the mere fellowship of all living beings, its significance in their system being much deeper. The conception of love is based on that of unity or oneness which is fundamental. Since all are one every man should love his neighbour not as *another* but as *himself*. The discrimination between a man's own self and the self of his neighbour has its root in ignorance. With the dawn of knowledge the wrong perspective of a man ceases and the love for his neighbour is identified with his feeling of self-love which alone is the genuine feeling of love. As Yājñavalkya has said, the self alone is dear for its own sake; all objects are dear because of the self.

Critics have often urged that Ethics can have no legitimate place in the Advaita system of philosophy since according to the Advaitins Brahman is the only reality and all distinctions including the distinction between right and wrong are false. But this objection falls to the ground, if it is pointed out that the Advaitins accept the validity of moral distinction from the empirical point of view. In reply to the remark that the Advaitins underestimate the value of ethical activity since activity or *karma* is the very opposite of *mokṣa* which

they regard as the *summum bonum* of life, it may be said that though the highest importance is attached to the realization of Brahman as one's very self which is the same as *mokṣa* yet the contribution of ethical activity to the cause of spiritual freedom or *mokṣa* is never ignored in Advaita. It is true that the ultimate emancipation is brought about by the mere comprehension of the great saying of the Upaniṣads, but one who has not already attained an extremely high state of moral development is not entitled to such a comprehension. The charge that the Advaita encourages inactivity by teaching that actions have no meaning at all for a *jīvanmukta* who has realized the falsehood of the world and they are the sources of bondage for one who is on the empirical plane, rests on a misunderstanding of the Vedāntic concept of *karma* or work. The Advaitins have attached great importance to disinterested work which never fetters a man. The *jīvanmukta* being perfect is free from all attachments. He can work without any fear of further bondage. As for one who has not yet obtained perfect knowledge, the performance of selfless action is necessary for self-purification. What causes bondage is not *karma* but attachment. One should not give up the daily (*nitya*) and the occasional (*naimittika*) obligatory rites which being disinterested in nature gradually purge one's mind of its selfish interests. It has been said that the concept of morality which presupposes the freedom of the will is incompatible with the teachings of the Advaitins who assert the supremacy of reason over will. Against this contention it may be urged that the intellectualistic ethics of the Advaita does not preclude the possibility of a moral life. As regards the freedom of the self the Advaitins maintain that looked at from the transcendental point of view the self is eternally free, since it is

pure existence above all categories of ordinary knowledge. The will being no part of the true self belongs to the empirical order determined by the conditions of space, time and causality. Man's freedom is not essentially the freedom of the will, but it is the freedom of Being. Will has its root in the conceit of agency which puts a limit to the manifestation of one's being. An expansive movement of freedom is felt in the self when the will comes under the guidance and control of reason. The most common charge against the Ethics of the Advaita is that it teaches asceticism and weans away men from society. But the charge is not well-founded. What the Advaitins aim at is not the annihilation of the body and the senses but the obliteration of the desires and passions which offer countless hindrances to the free growth of the spirit. The social aspect of life is not lost sight of. The life which the Advaitins prescribe for a man in the first stage of Vedāntic discipline is a life of social morality contributing to the upkeep of *varṇāśramadharmah*. The

jīvanmukta is the ideal of society. Though he has nothing to do for himself he works for the conservation of the social order (*loka-saṁgraha*). Unlike an ordinary work which proceeds either from a selfish motive or from a sense of obligation to others his work is a spontaneous expression of his realization of the oneness of all. [The *jīvanmukta* cannot be immoral, because his body and mind have been so attuned to the supreme unity that it is impossible for him to go wrong. He cannot be anti-social, because he sees all beings in himself and himself in all beings.

The gist of the Advaitic Ethics is contained in two words, viz. *self-denial* and *love*. The ethical ideal of the Advaita is not confined to mere peaceful co-existence but extends to the realization of the one identical truth in all. The Advaita has the message of universal love for the discordant humanity on social and political levels. It is hoped that the ethical appeal of the Advaita will elicit a healthful response from the contemporary mind.

REINCARNATION IN THE WESTERN WORLD

MR. ERNEST BRIGGS

Man in his physical living is a student of life; he goes through physical experiences in a world of time and space that he may turn all things to the ultimate profit of his spirit, that, by trial and error, yet not unled; growing surer and surer, purer and purer, he may at last find his way back to the great Immortal Source, whence is the Beginning and the Ending of his mortality. Spirit of Spirit, Man in his physical state learns painfully and slowly; he does not achieve to transcendental wisdom in a

single lifetime, but, like a child going to school, a student of the School of Life, that he may graduate to Life Eternal, he returns to the discipline of lessons many times, until at last he comes to the freedom of the World Invisible. By rounds of birth and death, Man wins to Home.

There is a mistaken idea that is still widely prevalent in the West, that the Truth of Reincarnation is confined to Eastern thought, and to the teachings of the great religions of the East; but Reincar-

nation has been as clearly manifested in the Occident as it has in the Orient.

Again and again and again, 'infant prodigies' of the Western world, old souls taking again the roads of earth in a later body, either for the discipline of the Self, or for service to a specific generation, have given incontestable evidence of their former experience of physical living through many rounds of birth and death.

Still hardly understood in the West, except by an enlightened minority, the Truth of Reincarnation is manifesting as clearly as ever it did. That the theatre of Reincarnation is not confined to the East was repeatedly emphasized by the Eastern mystic Curuppumullage Jinarajadasa (M.A., Cantab.) who stated unequivocally that Reincarnation is to be found EVERYWHERE both as a belief, and as a demonstration; that those of the Western world who know little or nothing of the Law of Karma, or of successive rounds of spiritual-physical rebirth, may encounter the fact of Reincarnation stressed more than once in Christian teaching. Jinarajadasa, a dear friend of mine for nearly thirty years, once said to me, 'Reincarnation is implicit in a simple statement of the Master Jesus. When questioned as to whether John the Baptist was Elijah reborn, He said "If ye will receive it, this IS Elias, which was to come!", following the statement with the significant words "He that hath ears, let him hear." My old friend smiled when I responded, 'But was not the Master Jesus, an Eastern Teacher?'. He returned, 'There is ample evidence of Reincarnation in Western literature, and in Western fact—if you but look for it.'

Yes, how right he was. Even in the hurly-burly, the materialism, and the selfishness and sensuality of so much Western living there are unmistakable evidences of the Truth of Reincarnation. The person who is referred to in journalism

as 'the man in the street'—the average human, has had unmistakable flashes of its truth in momentary experiences of illuminated consciousness when he realizes that some specific experience has been antedated by a similar experience, but he feels this vaguely, and knows not when, and knows not why. He dismisses it as 'strange', and 'forgets it'; but it is not forgotten, for the sense of vague wonderment still persists, and with repeated 'half-rememberings' a conviction is born in his conscious mind that he HAS been here before, a man. The testimony of the Self to the Self is not to be denied, even though the conscious Mind may not be able to explain it until real Illumination comes. But it is felt quite generally, and half-acknowledged, even though without explanation.

Who is there in the Western world who has not suddenly encountered a scene, a face, an incident that seems a 'flash-back' to old and vaguely remembered things, so that a man or woman is impelled to say spontaneously 'I know that!' The testimony of the Self is unmistakable. Who on meeting a person 'for the first time' has not been instantly conscious of familiarity, long ago and far away, so that the realization surges strongly that they are not making a new acquaintanceship, but merely renewing a reciprocity of spirit that was begun a long time since in other lives, and in years long spent?

These hints of previous living are not isolated experiences, indeed they are so general that it is a cause for wonder that the Western world has not had more cognizance of them. The sensitives of the Western world have pondered them, and some have come to the true explanation of them, as did the English poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose appreciation of the OLDNESS of the Soul, and of its repeated manifestation in the terrene ex-

periences of living, was beautifully crystallized in the following lines—'Sudden Light';

I have been here before,
But when, or how, I cannot tell;
I know the grass beyond the door,
The keen sweet smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

As sages have long appreciated Life as manifested on physical planes is initially quickened on high spiritual planes, and then stepped-down so that the physical and material plane may be experienced, through human form. Then, through the stress of human-living, the Self returns through all successive planes, passing from each to each through spiritual awakening and purification, through service to humanity and service to the Eternal Spirit, until the exiled spirit comes again to perfect union with the Eternal Spirit.

It is now becoming appreciated by Western sensitives that actually there are two parallel streams of Evolution, consequent upon Involution—the Evolution of Form, and the Evolution of the Individualized Spirit, passing from form to form and plane to plane to find its freedom in Divinity; that on this homeward journeying Man functions successively through ever finer vehicles of perception and experiences that range from the grossness of the dense physical, through the etheric, to the astral, then on through *manas*, the concrete lower mind, on through *buddhi*, the plane of greater wisdom, on through the Bliss, the plane of higher spiritual consciousness and all-embracing selfless Love, to the monadic plane, on which the entity manifests as abstract will, wisdom, and higher spiritual consciousness, and on and on after many incarnations to the plane of the Divine.

The Spirit in Man is not subject to dissolution and death because it is

not subject to the ties of human birth. The dense physical body at the natural incident called Death suffers dissolution, and the immediately superior bodies are also successively affected by the change. The higher spiritual principles, however, experience no diminution or change through man's rounds of incarnation in the world of time. These principles retain the abiding consciousness of the Real Self of Man, and it is in these higher vehicles that the vital memory of all past incarnations is preserved undimmed. After many incarnations, when surer, purer apprehension of these high states is achieved, the reincarnated man may consciously remember his previous incarnations in vivid detail, but this memory is not for man in his early rounds of place and time, yet even so, the majority of humans do have vague and intermittent flashes of 'half-memory'.

When an entity has gone far along the road of evolution, so that he lives more surely in the higher principles than in the lower planes of evolution he comes to the realization that all rounds of living are but phases of The One. It is then that the memories of his earlier rounds of birth and death are unfolded so that they seem to him as though they were but as a succession of nights and days in the time-world, so that all seem as passed through in a single span of life; as the spokes of a wheel lose their individuality in rapid motion, so that all appear as a unit.

The chain on which the successive incarnations of Man are strung is The Law of Karma—the law of Cause and Effect and that extends from one incarnation to another, connecting all. By the Law of Karma, past conduct builds the exact conditions that affect subsequent incarnations—our Yesterday determines our Today that in turn determines our Future. The individual man is held to the round of incarnation by the bonds of desire.

The purpose of rebirth is the acquirement of wisdom through experience, so that the full development of Man's all latent power may be accomplished. It is man's frailty that he clings to the physical and the terrene, even between incarnations; yearning inconsolably for the things of earth, as Mrs. Harriet Watson has it:

Give us again the crazy clay-built nest,
Summer, and soft unseasonable spring,
Our flowers to pluck, our broken songs
to sing,

Our fairy-gold of evenings in the west;
Still to the earth we love, our longings
cling,

The sweet vain world of turmoil, and
unrest.

But that which is Immortal in Man must learn to consciously remember and prefer its own Immortality. The chief function of the physical body is that the self may be enabled to experience the Laws of the Natural World, so that the Divine Law of Form fulfilled, the self aware of its oneness with all created life, may then become fully conscious of its own divinity.

The Self has to learn to remember, that its yearning for its True Home beyond all boundaries of Time and Place may be achieved—the Natural World is the beginning of it's awakening, as appreciated by the great Irish mystic, George William Russell:

I begin through the grass, once again to
be bound to the Lord.

I can see through a face that has faded,
the face full of rest

Of the earth, of the mother, my heart
with her heart in accord;

I begin through the grass, once again to
be bound to the Lord.

It was another Celtic mystic, Fiona Mac-Leod, manifesting through the Celtic poet William Sharp, who observed:

'It is we of the human clay only who
are troubled by the vast waste and re-

fuse of life. There is not any such waste, neither of the million spawn nor the myriad seed. . . . The Spirit sows by a Law that we do not see, and reaps by a Law that is beyond our reckoning.'

Man has to first become aware of his full Humanity; then he must become aware of his full Divinity.

An English poet, Winifred Welles has vividly appreciated this truth in a poem titled 'Cruciform':

Here in the sand, where someone laid
him down,

The one known human signature is
clear. . . .

Here, in one short line across another
line,

Is briefly written the one mutual name,
A Saviour's, or a thief's, or yours, or
mine!

The man who makes a failure of life in one incarnation, (as a scholar may make a failure in a school) is not compelled to be tied to a continuity of torment, by the Law of Karma, and successive rounds of incarnation, he has opportunities of progress—an anonymous poet has written:

He came to my desk with a quivering
lip—

The lesson was done—

'Dear teacher, I want a new leaf', he said,
'I have spoiled this one.'

In place of the leaf so stained and
blotted,

I gave him a new one, all unspotted,
And into his sad eyes smiled—

'Do better now, my child!'

The world of time and place is the only theatre of human living—as Maurice Materlinck has reminded us:

'Each man has to seek out his own special aptitude for a higher life in the midst of the humble and inevitable round of daily existence.'

The only way is onward, and upward,

through successive rounds of time-experience, as James W. Clark has written :

I saw the mountains stand,
Silent, wonderful, and grand,
Looking out across the land,
When the golden light was falling
On distant dome and spire,
And I heard a low Voice calling,
'Come up higher ! . . . Come up higher !
From the lowland and the mire,
From the mist of earth-desire,
From the vain pursuit of pelf,
From the attitude of self ;
'Come up higher ! . . . Come up higher !'

One round of physical living is too brief a time in which to make the whole great Pilgrimage of the Soul. . . . even on a long earthly pilgrimage many days of travelling are needed and many intervals of rest. As on the shorter journey, so on the longer—hence are the successive rounds of human incarnation.

The Eternal Plan of Life is Spiritual Evolution—a long slow cyclic ascent from the Lowest to the Highest—the strength of Man is in his Purpose and his Idealism—The Way is Onward, and the Way is Upward, as it has ever been.

The advanced soul in a new incarnation invariably gives clear and unmistakable evidence of talent that has been shaped and fostered in early incarnations, and which is preserved in its summation in the higher principles. This accounts for many 'geniuses' of the Western World revealing remarkable artistic and scholastic talent at a very early age, at which it is impossible to believe that such gifts and talents have been developed in babyhood. These may only be logically accounted for by Reincarnation—the carrying over of past experiences and talent, to manifest afresh in a newer round of physical living.

The history of every phase of artistic endeavour, of scholastic studies, of science and other related fields offers prolific

evidence of such infant talent. For such instances of outstanding mental and spiritual maturity manifesting in an infant-body there is no other acceptable explanation than of the previous mastery of skills, one does easily and consummately only what one has learned by long practice and diligent application—the same rule holds in all three spheres, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual.

In each generation, from time to time, the Western world is startled by remarkable evidence of surpassing talent enshrined in an infant-body. Some years ago the press made much of an instance of a young Latvian girl who possessed the power of 'seeing' into the minds of other people. The daughter of a poor Latvian farmer, who, unable to read, could repeat word for word anything that was being read by another person in a room in which she was present. It made no difference if the text was in a foreign language, English, French, German, when silently read in her presence, would be repeated unerringly, and in toto. To the simple-minded this seemed an uncanny power, but to those who have an understanding of incarnation in successive rounds of birth and death, there is no mystery. It is true that many such instances have been distorted by the 'popular mind of the people' to proportions of miracle and fantasy, but there is a sufficiently wide range of authentication as to be independent of any exaggeration or fabrication. An instance of a remarkable infant in the United States has been fully authenticated ; the son of a Harvard University professor William J. Sidas, could recite the alphabet at six months, and read and write proficiently and fluently at the age of two. He passed into Harvard University at the age of eleven, and graduated at fifteen. Mozart the great composer is a classic example of an infant prodigy, and the story of how he

astonished his family by playing a keyboard instrument accurately and fluently in his early infancy, without any musical training, has long been a favourite story of music-teachers who have endeavoured to spur on diffident pupils by the telling of the tale. At the age of three, following his earlier exhibition of talent, Mozart received his 'first music lesson', beginning to compose only one year later. At the age of seven the composer was as proficient on the harpsichord, organ, and violin, as any adult musician then on the Continent. One of his most astounding feats—the perfect transcribing of Allegri's 'Miserere' after hearing a performance only once—was achieved when he was a lad of fourteen. Reports from England, early in the present year, tell of a child-genius Maybelle Thompson who at the age of four has submitted mathematical papers to educationalists giving conclusive proof of remarkable ability. It has been recounted that she could read books at twenty-one months, and write fluently at twenty-six months. But there have been many other notable infant-prodigies in the Western world, such as The Infant of Lubeck, Christian Heineken, born over two hundred years ago, who was attested by many reliable witnesses to have talked only a few hours after birth. But the child was not long for this world, and although at the age of three he could reason with more logic and eloquence than many brilliant adults, at the age of four he foretold the imminence of his death, and died shortly afterward. Another remarkable infant, born in the same century was Jean Barattier. He became a Doctor of Philosophy at the age of fourteen, but he too, died before he had achieved adulthood. Not all infant prodigies die in infancy, many have lived on to extreme old age, particularly in the sphere of Music which seems more favourable to longevity than a number of

other pursuits; one recalls instances such as Sir Charles Santley, the noted English baritone singing as vitally in old age as when in his thirties, and making gramophone records of incomparable distinction, at the age of seventy-seven; Professor Francesco Berger, giving recitals on the pianoforte when nearing his century; Vladimir de Pachmann, veteran pianist, announcing yet another tour when an octogenarian, and Sir George Henschel, and Madame Blanche Marchesi, singing as impeccably as ever when well past three score years and ten.

Infant prodigies of earlier generations include, Francis Galton, British scientist, who could accurately point out the letters of the alphabet before he was able to speak; Jeremy Bentham, English jurist, who at four read and wrote English, Latin and Greek, entering Oxford University at the age of twelve; John Stuart Mill, who knew all the writings of Plato at the age of seven, William Pitt, who at the age of seven enlightened his own tutor on obscure aspects of studies set for him; Alexander Pope who wrote meritorious poetry in infancy; Goethe, who at six on hearing of the Lisbon earthquake fatalities, observed 'God knows that the immortal soul can suffer no harm through such a fate!'; Lord Macaulay, who when taken on a visit to Oxford University made a mental catalogue of the Library which he never forgot, and who at six wrote a compendium of Universal History; Harriet Martineau, who at six could recite all of Milton's *'Paradise Lost'*, and so on, for instances could readily be multiplied.

Among the many comparatively modern 'geniuses of the arts' must not be forgotten the greatest pianist since Liszt, Ferruccio Busoni, a virtuoso in his childhood; Franz von Vecsey, child violinist, who was a world celebrity at ten, and who developed steadily over the next three decades, for

a long time relinquishing Music, to prove reincarnation by making an extensive study—or should I write ‘re-study’—of Buddhism, in Eastern hermitages, before making a triumphal return to the concert platforms of Europe in the early thirties, shortly before his passing from the world of time; Willi Ferrero, the Italian-American child-conductor, who evidenced complete authoritativeness and musical understanding at the age of six, and who from seven onward conducted all the major orchestras of Europe, making his debut in Rome, conducting intricate works without score. It was of Willi Ferrero’s genius that Sir Landon Ronald, celebrated British conductor wrote, ‘The poise and maturity of the readings of this boy, the insight and the sensitivity that he reveals will stand comparison with those of the most famous conductors!’

A number of notable instances of reincarnation of talent, have come to my own notice over a space of years, and of these I will instance one that attracted my attention over thirty years ago, when Madame Marie Navarre, who had come to Radio Station 4 BK Brisbane to broadcast a beauty-talk, stopped me in the corridor outside the main-studio, saying, ‘Mr. Briggs, I know that little girl who is giving such a beautiful pianoforte recital in there.’ ‘Yes, Madame’, I responded, ‘Betty Ham. She is a brilliant musician, with a remarkable memory, and also an unerring sense of absolute pitch.’ Madame went on, ‘I heard her first when she was only four. Her brothers, Fraser and Richard brought her to me one hot day in summer, the three of them on one push-bike; Fraser pedalling, Richard doubling, and Betty on the handlebars. The boys rang the door-bell, and one said, “Madame, would you like to hear our little sister play the pianoforte?” I thought, “Oh, dear—scales and exercises; but—I want every little child to be happy,

so—why not?”. They all went into the music-room, and I went through the house to get them biscuits and a cooling drink. Coming back with a tray I heard the assured and beautiful rippling of a Chopin waltz. I said to myself incredulously, “Not that wee child!”, but it was. She was sitting before the keyboard, her little legs dangling, as her dextrous hands flew over the keys with all the assurance of a seasoned virtuoso. I placed the tray on a table, and when the solo was done, I gave her resounding applause. She smiled, and nodded gravely, and then she played piece after piece, all from the great concert repertoire, and all as beautifully detailed as the first had been. I said to myself, “Four! . . . she just couldn’t have learned all this in those few years!” There is only one explanation, Mr. Briggs, and that is—“Reincarnation!” I added, ‘do you agree?’, and Madame nodded, and said, ‘I certainly do! It was about this time that her brother Richard told me that “Before Betty could even speak she would frown if she happened to hear a wrong note, or a song that deviated from its rightful pitch.”’

How many a parent—puzzled parent, there has been to whom the enigma of a child of talent, would have been no enigma had they been appreciative of the Truth of Reincarnation! How wise was the great poet of Lebanon, Kalil Gibrān, when he wrote in *‘The Prophet’*, ‘Your children are not your children, they are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for Itself. They come through you, but not from you, and though they are with you, they do not belong to you.’

A humbler Western poet, Edgar Guest, has written also of the birth of a gifted child to ungifted parents—an unconscious reaction to Western sensing of the Truth of Reincarnation—the old and developed soul in an infant’s body :

Someday the world will need a man of
 courage in a time of doubt,
 And somewhere as a little boy that future
 hero plays about,
 Within some humble home to-day that
 instrument of greater things,
 Now sits upon his father's knee, or to
 his mother's apron clings,
 And when shall come the call for him to
 render service that is fine,
 He that shall do God's mission here,
 may be your little boy, or mine.

When the great men and women who
 shall grace the future pathways of human-
 ity are needed they will be here to serve
 and bless, through the Truth of Reincar-
 nation. This is a hope for the world, even
 in an era of the atom bomb. Highly evolv-
 ed entities are working, and will continue
 to work in subsequent generations, among
 all the peoples of the world—advanced
 souls come back to the world of time for
 timely service. I believe that in spite of
 present appearances to the contrary the

world of men has a longer future than any
 man may envision, that the Way is onward,
 and the Way is upward; that the race of
 man has a glorious future that even sages
 have but hinted at—Enlightened Ones are
 here, to guide, to bless, and to persuade.
 Did not Robert Browning more than
 glimpse this truth that day he penned:

Progress is the Law of Life;
 Man is not Man as yet;
 Nor shall I deem his object served, his
 end
 Attained, his genuine strength put fairly
 forth,
 While only here and there a towering
 mind
 O'er-looks its prostrate fellows; when
 the host
 Is out at once to the despair of night,
 When all mankind alike is perfected,
 Equal in full-blown powers—then not
 till then,
 I say, begins Man's general infancy.

EXISTENTIALISM AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

DR. MIHIR KUMAR MUKHERJEE

Of all the metaphysical ideas that have
 stirred human imagination in our times,
 existentialism stands pre-eminent. This
 pre-eminence does not consist merely in
 the method of approach, but also in the
 values it upholds. Existential philosophy
 avoids fruitless metaphysical speculation
 of the Schoolmen, as also the sky-high
 idealism of Plato, the phenomenism of
 Kant and all-embracing spiritism of Hegel,
 and takes cognizance of the internal dyna-
 mism of individual human being. Its
 theme is the unfolding of pure human ac-
 tivity and is immeasurably intricate, yet
 magnificently quiescent.

Existentialism, as Julian Banda said, is
 a revolt of life against the idea and thought.
 'Ideas', after Plato, in their eagerness to
 become immaculate, are likely to lose all
 contact with reality. Beyond existence,
 thoughts soar in imaginary plane, they
 cannot explain things. Thoughts tend to
 develop along a line culminating in pure
 speculation and reasoning unconnected
 with individual life. From Hume to Hus-
 serl, and from the Schoolmen to White-
 head, we find a drift to over-systematiza-
 tion and dialectics, to ready-made concepts
 and fixed dogmas. Existential thinkers lay
 bare the futility of it, and caution us

against thinking barren and potentially closed system, as Bergson would say. An incarnate obscurity envelops polemics that neither end in human consideration nor has a deep sense of human understanding and the sense of human values embedded within. Philosophy, in the present-day world, seeks to unfold the psychical construction of human person in all its aspects, practical and real.

Existentialism is anything but intellectual exploration of static events or symbolic representation of incidents that crowd in as concepts and abstractions. Intellectual exploration involves abstract generalization and formulation of hypotheses. It also entails the possible as against the actual, the indefinite, and often vague assortment of facts in preference to positive and distinct encounter. Realization of life is always through concrete existence and definite experience; it is a realm of perception and not of conception always; not isolated psychic states but entire being. Conception leads to what is known as essence, conglomeration of possible properties and qualitative ingredients. Traditional metaphysics deals with essence only, which, carried to its logical conclusion, would *pari passu* lead to the scepticism of Hume or nihilism of Nāgārjuna. In rejecting the philosophy of idealistic rationalism, the position of man has really been recognized, extolled, and restored to its rightful place. Thought is ideal, but it cannot be the total existence. 'The true is not higher than the good and the beautiful', observes an existentialist writer, 'but the true and the good and the beautiful belong essentially to every human existence, and are unified for an existing individual not in thought but in existence.' (H. J. Blackham: *Six Existentialist Thinkers*, p. 311) Imagination and feeling are indispensable for existence. Creativity, life of faith and restless love, reticent rich-

ness of crystalline beauty are not less important than pure and unmitigated intellect in this scheme. In the philosophy of existentialism, the ever receding moral ideal comes down to concrete realization of 'being' that we are, real and tangible.

Man exists. The fact warrants us to term him as a being, the first stage of knowledge and reality. Neither Kantian categories nor Hegelian mentalism furnishes a clue to the proper understanding of human being. They present us only with essence, i.e. structure, relation, quality, and quantity, degree, what and how,—the protective veneer of things in general. From here to Phenomenalism of Fichte or Pan-psychism of Spinoza and the Buddhist Yogācārins is not a far cry. We hardly need the dazzle of a form or brilliance of an artificial construction but the identity and nature of the Real—not pageant panorama but the clear perspective. Existence does not imply any of these qualitative distinctions or universal essence but the bare fact that either we exist or we do not. 'Being' we are or 'not-being'. 'Man is the point at which "being" comes to light, finds expression. While everything else falls within "being", man alone is aware of this. Some apprehension of "being" is therefore an integral part of his being; the obligation to know himself is laid upon him by the simple fact of being human. Man can only think and speak of "being" as he bears in mind that he is involved in it.' (E. L. Allen: *Existentialism from Within*, p. 23)

The core of existential philosophy, therefore, revolves round man as a being, i.e. his existence, his proficiency and attainment, his knowledge and consciousness, his choice and action, and above all, his freedom. A union of varied propensities, moody impulse, exciting stimulus, active consciousness, dark overwhelming unconscious that man is, no limitation can in-

fringe his movement, physical or mental, not even his so-called conscious mind which leads, initiates, and opens new vista, as it is infested with numerous artificial and false values. 'Man is comprehensive consciousness', says Jaspers, 'in which everything that exists can be known, recognized, designed, and purposed as an object.'

The world I live in is my own ; I will it, I determine it, I construct it, I command it. The events of my life as real, are my own making ; I have desired them out of varying circumstances. Altogether different could have been these, if my mind oscillated a bit to incline elsewhere. A politician of a warring nation, for instance, might commit suicide to disown moral responsibility, horrors, and dreadful aftermaths of a nuclear warfare.. If I cannot resort to this terrible escapism, I find the situation more tolerable than death. The liberty of selecting a definite course out of different and contradictory ways remains an exclusive prerogative of my own, and thereby I am free.

Persons interested in the modern trends of philosophy will be astonished to find at places some similarity obtaining between the theory of existentialism and the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. A practical knowledge of realization as Vivekananda's philosophy is, it tells the meaning of life as manifested in living. Around the existence of man and rightful living is centred his life-long striving, his incessant yearning to establish himself as a man. In theorizing and propounding it, and establishing a tenet thereof that is to become a movement in the years ahead, have been the work of our saint-philosopher. It is, however, not possible to find resemblance point to point. Still, perchance, when man is described by complete existence, and action and striving are brought in by way of defining him, the smiling face of

Vivekananda is seen in assent with existential philosophy ; when individual subjectivity and human universality are attempted to be befriended, his writings produce ample evidence ; and in finding out the relation between existence and transcendence his contribution is second to none. In fact, the more one reads Vivekananda the more one is convinced that the problems of man and existence, handled by the leading Existentialists, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, Sartre and Heidegger, Jaspers and Marcel, have been discussed here and often in deep detail.

That man exists is a recognized fact. He is not what he conceives of himself but what he makes of himself, what he wills. Not through inner potentiality alone that he is known ; rather it is by his action, varied and unalloyed, that he determines his own nature. With his individual experience, his subjectivity, his choice and responsibility man is fashioned. The entire monograph, *My Life and Mission* by Swami Vivekananda deals with this aspect of human form, its prospect and power, its manifold love and freedom sublime. In attaining a universal ideal of humanity every one completely comprehends his own self, the peculiar feature of free consignment, absolute and real. Such a perfect commitment may engender the effect of relativity of cultural pattern. Man, says Sartre, makes himself by the choice of his morality. To Vivekananda, man is the heart and centre of existence : 'I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute—I am He, I am He. . . . Existence is the last generalisation in the universe, so, we exist, we know it, and bliss is the natural result of existence without alloy.' And again : 'We are not drops to fall into the ocean and be lost ; each one is the whole, infinite ocean, and will know it when released from the fetters of illusion.' Man, then, is the whole, the individual whole, an entirely

distinctive mind. Perfection is reached when we say that he is infinite, unspeaking reticence of a warm and full life. 'Spirit is the mobilization of the powers of essent (existence) as such and as a whole. Where spirit prevails, the essent as such becomes always and at all times more essent. ... The enquiry into the essent as such and as a whole, the asking of the question of being is the fundamental condition for an awaking of the spirit. (Martin Heidegger : *An Introduction to Metaphysics*) Man's position in the universe is unique. 'The Self', says Vivekananda, 'is the condition of all in the universe, but It can never be conditioned. As soon as we know that we are It, we are free.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 23) Man, to all intents, is free. Independent choice makes him so; he can determine his motive. He is known by his action, he makes himself what he is. He cannot be valued from beforehand, nor actions can be predetermined. On his deeds, positive and real, depends his value.

A question is often raised : Was Swami Vivekananda opposed to contemporary mode of thinking and living? To his countrymen and admirers who have closely studied his life, the answer is quite easy. One who glorifies ancient tradition and heritage, to whom classical culture of India is a perennial source of inspiration cannot view the present drawback and shortfall in calm apathy. While Kierkegaard gets incentive from Greek culture and Socrates, and predicts the doom of mechanized Christendom, Vivekananda only offers to reform and remodel the present mode of living. In Europe, Existentialism made its appearance as a revolt against over-systematization in intellectual thinking. Fastidious formalism in life and superficialities in thought were ravaging nineteenth century India. Vivekananda does not hesitate to

leave the beaten track and advise to go against mediocre living, puritanism in established usages, and oppressing ideals. 'You forget your own part in this Karma—Yours is always the right to rebel', says he. (ibid., p. 263) In the heart of his co-workers and disciples is infused the spirit of rebellion, and also in all those to whom he acted as adviser. To every walk of life and thought it is carried, to every action and will it is spread. Transforming the aggressive aspect into a dynamic mental energy, he heralds a new movement : 'The Western ideal is to be doing; the Eastern to be suffering. The perfect life would be a wonderful harmony between doing and suffering.' (ibid., p. 265) Doing or suffering,—it is action in the realm of actuality and not possibility. Man is known by his action. (Bergson in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* wonderfully probes within human actions by saying : 'The inner life is all this at once : Variety of equalities, continuity of progress, and unity of direction. It cannot be represented by images.') In action he makes his existence felt. Through action the difference between existence and non-existence is established. By action he realizes his inner longing. Kierkegaard also holds activity as the very essence of spirit, through work and deed it becomes an object by itself. Man is practically nothing when he begins. He simply makes and builds himself appropriately, sheerly through personal endeavour. Much more important than conception is his willing. Vivekananda says : 'We always hope but never realize our hope.' He wills, and hereby the inanimate world is separated from the animate. Man makes himself conspicuous in the organic sphere by willing. Reality lies in action. 'Man is nothing but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realizes himself, he is nothing but the sum of his actions, nothing else but what life is.' (Sartre :

Existentialism and Humanism) Human realization is accomplished through action. A man is a possibility, a power to be, says Heidegger; choice of possibilities is also not final, and therefore, his existence is indeterminate, since it is neither a terminus nor devoid of adaptation. (*An Introduction to Metaphysics*) If action reveals man, then it is action that defines him, distinguishes him, ennobles him, uses him as means and material for Self-realization. When Vivekananda exhorts man to action, he voices the spirit of existence that man is nothing but a series of undertakings: 'There is no help for man. None ever was, none is, and none will be. Why should there be? Are you not man and woman? Are the lords of the earth to be helped by others? Are you not ashamed? You will be helped when you are reduced to dust. But you are spirit. Pull yourself out of difficulties by yourself! Save yourself by yourself! There is none to help you—never was. To think there is, is a sweet delusion.' He further adds, '... it is I who struggle, pray and worship, it is I who work out my problems. When I work I say grace to myself. Praise be unto me that I worked hard and acquired what I have.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 132)

Freedom is one of the keynotes of Existential philosophy. Writers of every shade of opinion, whether atheists like Sartre and Heidegger, Catholics like Kierkegaard, Karl Barth and Karl Jaspers, or litterateur like Camus, are one in emphasizing the necessity of self-determination in Existential scheme. Absolute power of self-regulation means existence. 'What is it we all seek: freedom. All the effort and struggle of life is for freedom. It is the march universal of races, of worlds, and of systems.' (ibid., p. 238) If action makes a man what he really is, then choice of action lies in his freedom. His initiation

and invention, selection and deliberation are exclusive rights having an absolute character. Physical absoluteness excludes influences *ab extra* of all denomination. Be it a universal concept or a norm of religion, social ideal or even political acumen, power of operation remains unaltered. The value of freedom entails complete control in both ways, negative and positive. Man has the ability to ignore and remain indifferent, passive and inert, to let things as they are. Freedom of choice and action lies in it. Freedom viewed by Vivekananda was one infinite fact: An all-pervading *nirus* lying deep in the vast inter-laced living consciousness of human mind. 'However mistaken we may be as to the method', says he, 'all our struggle is really for freedom. We seek neither misery nor happiness, but freedom. This one aim is the secret of the insatiable thirst of man. Man's thirst, says the Hindu, man's thirst says the Buddhist, is a burning, unquenchable thirst, for more and more. You Americans are always looking for more pleasure, more enjoyment. You cannot be satisfied, true, but at bottom what you seek is freedom.' (ibid., p. 250)

Freedom and existence are almost synonymous with the European Existentialists. To their Indian counterpart, freedom means attainment of the Infinite which in its turn is Existence *par se*. 'One Infinite alone can satisfy him, and that Infinite is himself. When he realizes this then alone comes freedom.' (ibid., pp. 250-51) Man's hankering for the unknown is significant. The spirit of freedom makes him ever active and restless. Jaspers believes that Infinite is touched and not comprehended. Man is able to go beyond his finiteness, being conscious of the presence of illimitable Infinite within. He knows full well the nature of his 'unattainable' ideal and also his infinite power potential;

he is tied down to the limitations of the former, and that a break through this bondage is possible. His unimpeded freedom is a freedom which is the fundamental experience of one's own nature. With the advent of the freedom of will, portals of a new horizon are opened doing away with shaky and ephemeral ideas, doubts and disbeliefs, disorders and uncertainties, resulting in the realization of the Infinite existence. 'One could imagine a delight and a power of self-determining, and a freedom of will', remarks Nietzsche, 'whereby a spirit could bid farewell to every belief, to every wish for certainty accustomed as it would be to support itself on slender cord of possibilities.'

Man is destined to struggle hard for the very purpose of life. Struggle against nature is physical and fighting is extended to mental plane. He feels himself free thereby and he freely exists. This assertion and positive averment are what life desires and what in Existential philosophy is eulogized. Says Vivekananda: 'I attain to the clearest and fullest consciousness of myself—I know that I am the infinite Spirit, the master of nature, not its slave. Beyond all differentiation and combination, beyond space, time, and causation, I am that I am.' (ibid., p. 249) Being of man is a spring of free spontaneous deeds. Incentive towards activity comes from within and social encounter commences. 'The goal to be reached is freedom. ... This life is a tremendous assertion of freedom.' (ibid., pp. 257-58) Life implies a series of undertakings involving relations. Sartre would not hesitate to hold man as the sum-total of the organization. Actions make a man; he is defined by the deed he has done. Man's action makes him a coward or a hero. And the possibility of a coward being freed from timidity and of a hero to fall short of heroism and glorious feats is always there. Man's freedom 'to

be' is founded on his ability 'to do'.

Freedom envisages responsibility. If external influence has little effect and self-determination has every say, then individual responsibility is a fixed criterion for one's way of life. Conscious of his inalienable freedom, man desires to find out what he can do and frames his motives accordingly. 'The human freedom is at the heart of all his potentialities and through transcendence; through the one, man is guided to his own inner unity.' (Karl Jaspers; *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*) Feeling of responsibility in duty and privileges blends inner and outer motives. Fusion of physical responsibility with moral, intellectual responsibility with spiritual, drives home this inner unity. If freedom is what makes existence a reality, responsibility makes freedom perfect. Realization of responsibility has a tremendous and far-reaching effect on human will. Antagonistic forces are cleansed off causing the entire heart to be pure by rationalizing the intentions, and this brings about inner unity to action. In Indian Ethical systems the details are laid down. And Vivekananda has truly reiterated the importance of practising *karma-yoga* (practical discipline) and *jñāna-yoga* (training of intellect) in order that free will and personal effort be amalgamated to enable man to attain real happiness which is another name of perfect freedom. Freedom from bondage is the recognized aim of human life in India: Man becomes the master of his own fate. It wields the highest of values. Sartre expresses it thus: 'Freedom is the value of all values.' Man is recognized by the type of action he performs. Existentialism implies free choice and valuation of actions. *Karma* discovers the potent force responsible for such actions.

Existentialism is a philosophy of being. Life and living, incessant continuity and

inflecting selectivity are not simply its features but its ingredients. Existence is not a matter of thought but is actually encountered. Contest, opposition, struggle, and presence of contradictory tendencies only prove our freedom, and also that we bear real responsibility of involvement. The choice is strictly personal and the possibility and approximation nullify all objective forms. 'We encounter the essent everywhere; it sustains and drives us, enchants and fills us, elevates and disappoints us; but with all this, where is, and wherein consists, the being of the essent (existence)?' asks Heidegger.

The answer is to be found in the perpetually striving nature of the human being; it is never a finished product. Being in existence signifies an approach toward perfection, nearing consummate state of the highest degree in quality and condition. A graphic delineation of this state from the lucid pen of Vivekananda is; 'Apart from the question of the chances of attaining perfect liberty, it is clear that the whole universe is a case of struggle to expand, or in other words, to attain liberty. This infinite space is not sufficient for even one atom. The struggle for expansion must go on eternally until perfect liberty is attained. It cannot be said that this struggle to gain freedom is to avoid pain or to attain pleasure. The lowest grade of beings, who can have no such feeling, are also struggling for expansion and according to many, man himself is the expansion of these very beings.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 147) By harmonious blending of knowledge and impulse, man strives after personal integrity. 'Existen-

tial truth is a progressive realization of the human measure in an individual life, so that man can be said to live on truth and be made free in and by it.' (James Collins: *The Mind of Kierkegaard*)

Man's existence, therefore, is an intrinsic and integral expression coming to light whenever the concepts such as life and living, continuity and potency, freedom and choice, activity and certainty are experienced unimpaired. As Sartre says, 'Our aim is precisely to establish the human kingdom as pattern of values in distinction from material world.' Swami Vivekananda, as the world knows, lived and died to translate the idea of human freedom into a concrete reality with punctilious efficacy. He was a Vedāntin and in life his Vedānta was a living doctrine. Man, to him, is what he makes of himself. In his deed and experience, in encounter and endeavour, in anxiety and anguish his real Self is truly expressed.

In Swami Vivekananda realistic Existentialism finds a common platform with monistic idealism: excellence of particular realization is the basis of integral experience of liberation. To Kierkegaard's ideal of happiness eternal of man, Sartre's dignity of man in deed, Nietzsche's emphasis on passion, anxiety, and decision of individual man, Jaspers' human choice, Marcel's fidelity on human freedom, and Heidegger's integral man is significantly added Swami Vivekananda's great absoluteness of spirit. 'There is only one individual existence in the universe', he upholds, 'ever free and ever blessed, and that is what you are.'

THE ECONOMIC TWINS: HAPPINESS AND DESIRE

SRI P. KUMAR

INTRODUCTION

Every normal human being has the in-born instinct of self-preservation and preservation of his race, of course, with preferences. To accomplish the above instincts, he has been endowed with the other instinct of self-interest, i.e., minimum sacrifice and maximum gains or in the terminology of Economics, employment of minimum input with the hope of maximum output. Goaded by the instinct of self-interest, everybody performs some activities or other to earn livelihood. These human activities are called, in the parlance of the science of Economics, the economic or the productive activities. Human activities are inextricably linked up with happiness, the counterpart of desire. Economics has been defined by some as 'a Science that studies human activities as endeavour to reach the final end of happiness.' According to Balgangadhar Tilak, 'Any act which a man performs is performed by him either for obtaining happiness, or for warding off unhappiness.' (*Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā Rahasya*, Translated by B. S. Sukthankar, Vol. I, 1935, p. 103) The goal of human activities is happiness. Happiness is the sauce of human life. George Santayana has very aptly remarked, 'Happiness is the only sanction of life: where happiness fails, existence remains a mad and lamentable experiment.'

THE EQUATION OF HAPPINESS

The rules of Mathematics are not amenable to the concept of happiness but Dr. Stanley (*The Future of Underdeveloped Countries*, 1961, p. 22) has quoted the following equation for the purpose of elucidation:

$$\text{Happiness} = \frac{\text{Possessions}}{\text{Desire}}$$

Presumably, in the above equation, the numerator 'Possessions' stands for satisfaction of desires. Resorting to the semantics of Statisticians, it may be said that there is a perfect positive correlation between Happiness and Possessions but perfect negative correlation between Happiness and Desires.

Sri Tilak had long back expressed, in a better form, the equation of Happiness. According to him, the mathematical form of the equation may be expressed as the following ratio between the two:

$$\frac{\text{Enjoyment of happiness}}{\text{Desire for happiness.}}$$

He has argued that '... its denominator, namely, the desire for happiness, is always increasing in a greater measure than its numerator, namely, enjoyment', and he comes to the conclusion, '... it is futile to entertain the hope of a man becoming happy.' (B. Tilak: op. cit., p. 21) Thus, happiness a two-faced coin—its one side is possessions or enjoyment of happiness and its reverse is desire.

THE QUEST FOR PRAGMATISM

There is a reference in the *Mahābhārata* (*Śāntiparvan*, 139-61) that 'Every one is unwilling to suffer and every one wants happiness'. The natural corollary is that man strives for enhancement of possessions, to put it more correctly, enjoyment of happiness and satiety of desires. The first and foremost thing, that any human being aspires after, is happiness. 'Bless me with the ability to be happy in whichever circumstances I am', is the prayer a man makes. Happiness is acquired by fulfilment of desires, and this is possible only

through human activity. When Leo Tolstoy observes that 'Man is made for happiness and this happiness is in him the satisfaction of daily needs of his existence,' the words 'daily needs of his existence' stand for the human activity. Activity is an ingredient of a normal human being. One fails to follow Dr. Stanley's queer conclusion that '... the ascetic philosophy of the East is losing ground to the activist philosophy of the West.' (Dr. Stanley: op. cit., p. 21) Even the *Bhagavad Gītā*, which is regarded to be the essence of the Upaniṣads points out:

'*Na hi kṣaṁcīt kṣaṇamāpi jātu tiṣṭhat-yakarmakṛt*'. (III. 5) This clearly means that the cycle of action does not cease even for a moment. It has its bearing not merely on individual life but also on collective life. To quote the *Bhagavad Gītā* again:

'*Loka saṅgrahamevāpi sampāśyaṇ kartu-marhasi*'. (III. 20) The above line bears out that activity is an essential factor for universal welfare.

To many 'desire' seems to be the root cause of unhappiness. Schopenhauer observes, 'It is impossible to destroy unhappiness, unless desire is destroyed.' The *Bhagavad Gītā* compares desire to insatiable fire:

'*Kāma rūpeṇa Kaunteya duṣpūreṇānalena ca*'. (III. 39)

Besides the philosophers, desire has been looked down upon by many thinkers. In the words of George Bernard Shaw (*Man and Superman*, IV), 'There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire. The other is to get it.' George Bernard Shaw's remark, 'The other is to get it' also means that desire is recurrent. It is an axiom that man does not stop his activities with the achievement of desired objects; further efforts continue. Because of this very fact Benjamin Franklin opines, 'It is easier to suppress the

first desire than to satisfy all that follow it.' Thus, the cold confession is that desire is the mother of all human activities. Dr. Radhakrishnan, while analysing *Karma-Mārga* has pertinently pointed out, 'When desires are destroyed, it is not possible to act.' As such, it is perpetual. The extract from Shelly's lyric:

'The desire of the moth for the star,

Of the night for the morrow,

The devotion to something afar,

From the sphere of our sorrow.'

indicates that desire is eternal and it is a counterpart of happiness.

It means that the urge for desire can not be easily given up. But it should be an eye-opener that over-fulfilment of desire, like its non-fulfilment, may also lead to unhappiness. The over-fulfilment of desire for 'progress from a pain to a pleasure economy', mothered by the machines and sired by the industrial power, has ensued in symptomatic 'surpluses' in the 'affluent economy' and the lack of 'offtake' is likely to shatter its 'take off' stage. John H. Crowe rightly feels, 'Desire should balance with possibilities. Otherwise the foundation is being laid for unhappy, if not neurotic living ... Ambition is vitally necessary to success, but too much of it can pose serious problems and fix dangerous alternatives.'

THE PRAGMATISM

To many economists, the 'the aura of sanctity' seemed 'clinging to gold'. (Geoffrey Crowther: *An outline of Money*, 1962, p. 296) But the legendary king Midas was not happy at heart even after being blessed with abundant gold. Shelly's versification:

'Ye seek for happiness—alas, the days,

Ye find it not in luxury nor in gold ...'

also speaks of the futility of gold as a source of happiness.

Seneca has wisely said, 'Humanity is for-

fortunate, because no man is unhappy except by his own fault.' Therefore efforts should be made to secure happiness.

One need not wait for happiness to accrue gradually. Charles Eliot opines, 'The best way to secure future happiness is to be as happy as is rightfully possible to-day.' But there is no magic-wand to secure happiness. Epicurus suggests, 'The only way to be happy is to invite others to partake of your happiness.' Arguing in the similar vein Emerson writes: 'Happy is the house that shelters a friend.'

With due apologies to the learned philosophers, the above analysis goads one to infer that material happiness is the state of mind, i.e., very much internal than external. That is why George Bernard Shaw (*Candida* I) has metaphorically said, 'You have no right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.' The underlying reason is that happiness is inseparable from activity or work, which is regarded as worship, and mind is the generator, director, as well as controller of all human activities. Professor J. K. Mehta puts the same as, 'Our mind reacts through the body.'

(*Studies in Advanced Economic Theory*, p. 2)

CONCLUSION

The inborn instinct of self-preservation is the mother of all human activities whose sole aim is happiness. Hence, the solution for the problem of economic happiness and desire should be sought in mind, i.e., reason. There should be no divergence between motives and methods. The mind should be motivated to contentment and to keep the desire neither to minimum (an impossibility), nor to maximum (a probability), but to optimum (a desirability). The continual strife for happiness is inevitable. Though 'Unhappiness is the cause of progress', endeavours must be made for its circumspection. 'Unfulfilment as well as over-fulfilment of desire leads to unhappiness. The motive always exalts the action. Happiness internal is the pivot on which rests happiness external as well as happiness eternal. A number of suggestions have been offered to promote happiness and ward off unhappiness. But, desire, controlled or re-oriented through reason, seems to be the best solution to the baffling problem.

SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION

SRI C. C. CHATTERJEE

Sacred knowledge is latent in the soul, says Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*. It requires only a stimulus to manifest itself.

Education provides the stimulus and every stimulus with its corresponding reaction exercises a profound influence on the development of the life and character of men. It may either be mainly aesthetic, ethical, intellectual or physical; but

to be satisfactory it must involve and improve all the sides of human capability.

Education must begin early in life. Boys and girls are to be put under training in the impressionable age, when they have not yet lost the child's curiosity, and when they can learn and assimilate what they are taught. But they must be left to themselves. They must have freedom in their

work and play, so that they may learn to rely upon their own resources. Dr. Montessori, 'who saw the secret of knowledge in the wisdom of the child', says, 'The child who has never learnt to act alone, to direct his own action, to govern his own will, grows into an adult who is easily led and must lean on others... The obedience which is expected of a child, both in the home and in the school—an obedience admitting neither of reason, nor of justice—prepares the man to be docile to blind forces.'

Children must have freedom to grow. In every one there are infinite tendencies which require proper scope for growth. And freedom is the first condition of growth. The teacher is not to curb the freedom, but to see that freedom does not degenerate into licence which hampers growth.

We may here consult Rabindra Nath Tagore, the educationist. He writes, 'Once I stayed with a Japanese gentleman. He found pleasure in gardening. He was a Buddhist and a worshipper of *Maitrī*. He used to say, "I love trees and plants; the energy of my love enters into them; their fruits and flowers grow as a reaction to that love." It is needless to say that this holds good in the case of the gardeners of human minds. In the true contact of mind with mind grows happiness. This happiness is imbued with creative energy. Those who have a sense of duty, but not this happiness, theirs is a different line. I have come to recognize the simple relationship between disciple and *Guru* as the chief medium of education.'

From what has been said above, the words of Gibbon become quite significant. He says, 'Every person has two educations—one which he receives from others, and one—more important—which he gives himself. What he receives from others is a formal education. It is the imparting of knowledge through schools and colleges

and universities. It often ends with the school-room; but education ends with life, just as it also began with life.'

Informal education continues throughout the experiences of a whole life. The object of formal education is the integration of the individual to the civic life moulded by the political and economic life of a country. And the object of informal or self-education is to produce men of a higher type. The cultivation of one's own self with confidence and reverence can make the higher life possible. The necessity of sound moral instruction both in the school-room and outside is imperative. The need of training children in virtuous dispositions and refined tastes and holding before the youth attractive selfless motives is equally imperative, so that they may grow up ready to respond to the claims of service before those of the self. 'The worst education that teaches self-denial', said Sterling, 'is better than the best that teaches everything else and not that.' We have to search for methods to get away from selfishness. Lazy will, fear of pain, greed for pleasure and a host of other evils invade the youthful mind and imprison it within the narrow walls of self-seeking motives. To liberate the mind from the domain of mere self-interest, from the claims of egotism, there must be sufficient strong motives. Spiritual life, which is the pursuit of universal ends, is perhaps the best discipline to accomplish the end which Russell places as the goal of seekers of happiness.

But the purpose of education will remain unfulfilled if the teacher does not instil into the youthful mind of the students the words of Solomon, the Wise—'The fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom'. Without this faith in a divinity which shapes our ends, no education is complete or effective. 'Religion is the innermost core of education', says Swami

Vivekananda. Some one has pertinently remarked 'Educate men without religion and you will make them but clever devils.'

The eternal principles of Truth, Goodness and Beauty are to be held before the students and they are to be the guiding principles of any sound system of education. Education must be related to what is best in the cultural tradition of the land, so that the present may be culturally integrated to the past. It must also be capable of intelligent adaptation to the changing moral needs. It should reflect a self-contained philosophy of life.

'Education', says Swami Vivekananda, 'is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.' The aim of education is to draw out the powers inherent in him. That is the root meaning of the word. Education needs an orientation consistent with the country's national ideals, and the demands of the particular age in which it is intended to spread. But there are difficulties in the implementation of making a system uniform throughout the country. The causes may be any or all of these—(1) Poor economy of the country; (2) Want of liberal approach to the system; (3) Want of teachers with a missionary zeal. The problem becomes more difficult when we consider that in our country we have to educate more than 50 millions of boys and girls with their number increasing every year.

Yet this number is a small proportion of the total population of the country. Out of every hundred, 76 people have got no proper education. This is the appalling number of the illiterate in this land of culture and civilization. An old teacher with a painful heart tells his students, 'Look at the common people of the country. You read in schools and colleges. There are many people around who never had any opportunity to read. Yet in numbers they are quite large. These mute

people have to be provided with a tongue; it is only then that education will be justified. If you make arrangements for their education, you will get the blessings of your mother country.'

One will be surprised to hear that millions are still illiterate in this land of ours. This is a blot on the fair name of an independent country. But it will not do to throw the responsibility of educating these illiterate people on the Government. Every educated person of the country is equally responsible for this country-wide ignorance. Though you are an individual your responsibility is not the less. You are the future of the country. The whole country looks upto you. One expects that you will not forget this duty. Whatever education you have got if you impart an iota of it to these illiterate people you will change the face of the country. When you organize any club or association among you make some provision to hold regular classes for the neighbouring illiterate adults. To exorcise the ghost of illiteracy from the country, you ought to know the methods educationists have formulated for the spread of mass education. And one such method is—each one teach one.

But education is not the amount of information imparted to students and stuffed in their brain, nor is it merely a means of securing some employment. The aim of education should be the building of a society in which the members are well off. When the aim has been decided teachers may help the students to understand and realize the intrinsic value of education. This may be achieved if the teachers make and mould the minds of the students so that all may be properly qualified to study with a high aim in life.

But there are many difficulties that stand in the way. We often incur more expenditure on higher and technical studies

than on primary training, we pay more attention to the superstructure than to the foundation. Secondly, many types of students with diverse qualities come in schools. Their proper handling is a serious problem. Only teachers with necessary qualifications can deal with the problem, when they themselves have been relieved of the worries of life, and can make the two ends meet. Teachers are generally poorly paid ; there are very few who are well off.

They can guide the students on proper lines by setting examples of industry, morality and discipline. In discharging their duties they are to be strict, as they are in class-management ; but they should not be stern and hard taskmasters. They ought to see that the students are not afraid of coming in contact with them, so that they may influence them in their work and play.

Government plan to bring education under its control may facilitate the attainment of uniformity in pattern and standard. But the method is not free from danger, specially with regard to the language problem where in every 100 persons 87 speak one or the other of the 14 languages of India, less than 7 know an Indian language other than their mother tongue and less than 3 know English.

But the country needs a language to bring the people close together. Politicians are emphatic that the medium of instruction in universities should be the regional language ; but academic opinion is against it. People of India, at least the student world, should be acquainted with English. This is the age of science and in order to keep abreast of the times, students should have the latest informations about the developments of science and technology. These informations are easily available in journals and books which are mostly published in English. There is no Indian lan-

guage with a scientific vocabulary in which the books could be translated. Hence we have to depend upon English at least for some time to come. But some Indian language, preferably Sanskrit, has to be found as the *lingua franca* of India, for the close association of the people and the integration of the country.

In the primary stage boys and girls are to be taught in their mother tongue, but higher education must be given in college and universities by adopting one common language, which for the present has to be English. Substitution of English by regional languages will weaken the unifying link of the nation. Higher education should therefore, be imparted through the medium of one language.

Education brings knowledge. It comes from the reading of books ; our never-failing friends are they with whom we may converse from day to day. It comes from travels in places of historical interest ; discussions with educated people and company of the great and good.

Education is a long-term process. It is judged by the accomplishments of the students in different walks of life. Their normal faculties are developed by systematic training, instruction and discipline, specially to form and regulate their bodily and mental habits so as to render them efficient in some particular form of work or mode of life.

Students should be given some responsibility to take part even in the running of schools and colleges to enable them to acquire self-reliance and ability for right thinking. When they enter the university or other technological institutions for higher education they would then be in a better position to develop their latent faculties and dignify their profession. This will inspire them to work for the social, economic and cultural regeneration of the

country. Success again will depend upon amongst the students by their own example the teachers who can kindle a fire of life and determined work.

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

SRI B. G. NIKAM

Swami Vijnananandaji Maharaj, the fourth President of the Ramakrishna Order, was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and a brother-disciple of the great Swami Vivekananda. It is well-known to all that he was a B.E. (Bachelor of Engineering) of the Poona Engineering College and had served the country as a District Executive Engineer in the then provinces of C.P., Berar and U.P. Later on he relinquished all in response to the call of Swami Vivekananda and joined the monastic Order. He entered into *mahāsamādhi* on April 25, 1938. I would still remember the day when he blessed me with initiation on March 17, 1937, at Allahabad.

I was in the habit of reading Swami Vivekananda's works from my college days and was deeply interested in Swamiji's mission of service, started by the Order. Also I used to visit the Bombay centre of the Ramakrishna Mission from time to time. Naturally I became intimate with all the inmates and the devotees there. A young man of twenty-two, having deep love for and faith in Swamiji's ideals I came close to Swami Viswanandaji, the then Head of the centre. It was 1929. I had just passed B.Ag. Examination from the Bombay University and was thinking of joining the monastic Order. As I expressed my thoughts before Swami Viswanandaji he asked me to think over the matter again and again. 'It is not an easy job as it looks like', he said, 'to lead

the life of a *sannyāsin*; one should not be led by one's emotions.'

We were in correspondence for a long period when the Swami advised me to get myself initiated and asked me to come to the Bombay Ashrama from Satara where I was in service. I met him accordingly. But, for initiation the permission of the President, Swami Vijnanananda Maharaj, was necessary and it was not an easy affair to get it. President Maharaj was then too busy in translating the *Rāmāyaṇa* into English. As if quite aware of his approaching *mahāsamādhi* he was anxious to complete the work soon. He would, therefore, not allow any one to disturb him in his work and would invariably refuse the initiation to many. But I was fortunate to have this rare privilege. Surprisingly enough the permission came.

With great expectation and joy I started for Allahabad on March 14, 1937 and reached there on the morning of 16. I was cordially received by a monk who was then attending on President Maharaj that time and was asked to take rest for the day. Accordingly I took my bath and meals and spent that day in full rest.

Next morning I was called by the President Maharaj and was asked to have a bath in the Triveni Sangam. The President Maharaj asked his attendant monk to help me in that respect. I went to the Sangam, took the bath and came back to the Ashrama at about 11.30 a.m.

By the time everything necessary was

arranged for my initiation and I was asked to take a seat in front of the portraits of Sri Guru Maharaj and the Holy Mother. The President Maharaj performed *pūjā* and gave me the sacred *mantra*. I was then asked to prostrate before the photos and to repeat the *mantra* several times in mind and to meditate on Sri Guru Maharaj and the Holy Mother. After this I was again asked to go to an adjacent room in which there were other photos of Sri Guru Maharaj and the Holy Mother and I was asked to prostrate before them. I was then called back by Maharaj and asked to take my seat in front of him. It was then about 12.30 p.m.

Both of us sat in silence for a few minutes. As the initiation was over I felt a little perturbed and became afraid about the things. I was taken over by a thought that I had been tied down to some unusual and strange ways of the life. What else could a young man with no matured thoughts and ideas of either worldly matters or spiritual life think other than that? I had no knowledge about the initiation and the *guru*. I simply used to hear about them.

After a while the President Maharaj himself broke the silence and asked me whether I knew as to why there were one hundred and eight beads in a rosary. To this I replied, 'Maharaj, I do not know.' He then said, 'hundred and eight is the fraction of the circumference of the earth.' He showed it to me by actual calculations with a pencil on a piece of paper lying near by him on his table.

Next thing that he said to me was very important but I was least prepared for it: 'Ask any question that you may have?' This was a question from a great authority on the subject to a man who, although educated in the modern way, was not accustomed to face such a situation. I

still recollect that my little heart started beating, but at the gentle smile of Maharaj, I gathered confidence. With a fearful tone I prayed to Maharaj to guide me as to how I should behave in my life and what I should eat and what I should not? 'You should observe three things in life. First you should speak the truth; second, eat as you like, but in a moderate quantity and third, pray to God the creator of the Universe.' Thus came the emphatic instruction which was precise in words and penetrating in convictions.

To me then Swami Vivekananda was the greatest of all the souls in the world. I had not heard much about Sri Guru Maharaj. Therefore I asked another question, 'Maharaj, I do not know who is greater of the two—Sri Ramakrishna Deva or Swami Vivekananda.' As he heard this question, he forthwith jumped from his chair and readily flashed: 'Oh, What to tell you about him! It was Sri Ramakrishna who had created the one like Swami Vivekananda and he could create such thousands. Of course, souls like Swami Vivekananda belong to a very high order. Sri Ramakrishna Deva is the incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma. He is the creator and the Master of the whole of universe.' His voice was deep and mood, profound.

When the talk was over he again sat in deep silence as if transported back to those unforgettable days of joy and bliss of the past. I touched his lotus feet again and he asked me to go and take my meals.

I was to leave Allahabad that day and start for Varanasi. I therefore, went to Maharaj to touch his holy feet again in the afternoon and to take his blessings and permission. He was resting on the bed but fully in wakeful state. As I touched his feet he placed his holy right hand on my head, blessed me and gave me the permission to go to Varanasi.

I also requested Maharaj to touch the newly purchased rosary of mine and he was kind enough to do so.

He then asked the attendant Swami to arrange for a person who would take me safely to the station and put me in the train and report to him back. What a love and care for his disciples!

I reached Varanasi on March 17, stayed there for a few days and thereupon I proceeded towards Calcutta so that I could

visit Belur Math, the Dakshineswar temple and other holy places there.

I returned to Bombay again but certainly with a new life, richer in spirit and nobler in outlook to inspire me to the last days of my life. Today when I remember those events, the rare company of that great holy soul, his love and his care I become overwhelmed with joy and devotion. Indeed I think myself blessed in my life.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Sudhindra Chandra Chakravarti M.A., D.Litt., Darśanācārya is the Reader in Philosophy of the Visva-Bharati University. He is also well-known for his scholarship and depth of understanding. In his article 'The Ethical Aspect of Advaita' Dr. Chakravarti reviews the ethical base of Advaita thinking and considers it to be a dynamic science of great human possibility. The article is the text of a paper, read and discussed by him in the Ethics Section of the Indian Philosophical Congress, held in December, 1965.

In the article 'Reincarnation in the Western World' Mr. Ernest Briggs, the well known writer of Brisbane, Australia thoughtfully studies the Law of the transmigration of souls from a Westerner's point of view.

Existentialism is a comparatively modern philosophy. While explaining briefly the basic principles of this school of thought, Mihir Kumar Mukherjee, M.A., D.Phil., of

Raiganj College, West Dinajpur, West Bengal, attempts to show in his article how parallel thoughts are often found in Swami Vivekananda's speeches and writings. He is of the opinion that 'persons interested in the modern trends of philosophy will be astonished to find at places a good deal of similarity obtaining between the theory of Existentialism and the teachings of Swami Vivekananda.'

Happiness and Desire are the obverse and reverse of a same coin. In the article 'The Economic Twins: Happiness and Desire' Sri P. Kumar of Jaipur, Rajasthan makes a short analysis of the two concepts.

In the article entitled 'Some Thoughts on Education' Sri C. C. Chatterjee of Hoogly, West Bengal considers education as the fundamental pre-requisite of Indian national life.

Sri B. G. Nikam, M.Sc. (Ag.) of Gwalior recounts in his short article his 'Reminiscences of Swami Vijnanananda.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE DOCTRINE OF BUDDHA. By DOLLY FACTOR. Philosophical Library Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. 1965. Pages 132. Price \$ 4.75.

This book is a testimony of a living Buddhist to the doctrine of the Buddha from the Philosophical and the Psychological and the religious point of view. In the 'Apology', which is a sort of foreward, the author forewarns that faith is not the final answer and that authority cannot be blindly accepted. In the several chapters of the book she takes the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism, namely the *Kṣāṇika-vāda*, the *Anātma-vāda*, the doctrine of *Pratītya-samutpāda* and finally the concept of *Nirvāṇa*. But an account of the basic principles is not enough. So the author gives an account of the way to achieve *mokṣa*, as preached by the Buddha, the Eight-fold path.

Every chapter has a footnote, added on as a sort of appendix, in very small print. It is here that the author draws parallels between modern theories of Psychology and Buddhist theories. In addition to these there is an Epilogue, Appendix to political Psychology, Appendix to *Anātta*, Appendix to Freud's libido theory.

It is evident that the author is fired by a zeal to make available the noble philosophy of the Buddha to the modern western minds in terms of western modern ideas. Whatever benefit the western reader might get out of such a book, to a person brought up in the cradle of Buddhist thought, the book provides little of interest. No doubt, the missionary enterprise is laudable but a better and simple presentation of the subject matter would have been more welcome. For example, it is desirable that a book of this type should be well documented. Quotations which are freely used have to be more properly documented. Sometimes one wonders whether the author is speaking from mystical heights or from a logico-philosophical point of view or from a psychological scientific point of view. For example in page 12 one finds, 'When we reach maturity we have become aware that predominantly the law of the jungle—that blood-red law of eat or be eaten—prevails everywhere—even among men'! This is but a more lucid example of the various statements in the book.

The use of different sizes of type-sets—perhaps for emphasis—is a little confusing.

On the whole the book is a useful addition to all

those who seek from Buddhism a guiding light for their practical lives.

DR. (MRS.) SARASVATI CHENNAKESAVAN

MODERN INDIAN THOUGHT: A PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY. By V. S. NARAVANE. Asia Publishing House, Calicut Street, Ballard State, Bombay-1. Pages 310. Price Rs. 20.

Dr. Naravane states in the Preface that he has discussed questions regarding philosophical topics in the 'Larger context of Indian life and culture' in this book. The need to do this is explained in an elaborate manner in his first chapter 'Background and Characteristics of Modern Indian Thought'. It is quite correct to say that books on modern Indian thought expatiate only on the political and social reforms omitting to make any mention of the contribution to philosophy by modern thinkers. The author is of opinion and I endorse it very emphatically that even philosophers in India have a tendency to ignore the recent developments in the region of philosophy owing to a mistaken belief that everything that can be achieved in Indian philosophy has already been achieved by the eighteenth century. 'Many Indians do really believe that when the last classical system of Vedānta had been formulated the Indian philosopher had nothing more to do; he put up the shutters, went home, and has been slumbering ever since'. (p. 5)

It is unfortunate that while the author holds to this opinion, he himself has fallen a prey to such a speculation in his estimates of recent thinkers. For example, he is very anxious to show that both Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore are only enlarging upon the Vaiṣṇavite tradition (pp. 118 and 178). But at the same time the author is very much aware, as he has shown in several passages that Tagore and Gandhi are not system builders. So to push their philosophies into pigeon holes and call them either as theists or absolutists is not fair to their life work. One can easily find as many references to absolutism in both the thinker's speeches and writings (p. 181 in the book itself) as references to theism.

Instances like this, where these giants have talked of ultimate reality as absolute can be multiplied. Similarly there can be no doubt that Mahatma Gandhi never belittled the voice of rational thought although he extolled 'intuition' (p. 182). This and the assertion that Gandhi was a mystic go hand in hand. Truth, to Mahatma Gandhi was not a 'revelation' (p. 183) as the author claims. On the

other hand Truth, for him, was a culmination of the rational understanding. No doubt the Mahatma believed in concentration, but it was a concentration motivated towards finding a solution to a practical problem and not the meditation of a saint seeking answers to philosophical questions. Perhaps the Mahatma's 'Mysticism' is of a different variety than what is ordinarily understood by the term. But to use such a term to indicate something different from the accepted meaning is not fair to the common reader. But of course, in the last resort reason is but a stepping stone to intuitive understanding and Mahatma was a most practical man who scoffed at those who said that they could practise renunciation only in forests. He was a man who was a practical saint. However, the author's account of these two great souls' thought is exhaustive and provocative.

The most brilliant exposition is that of the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. The vivid language, the forceful presentation brings out in sharp lines the personality of the Swamiji and the reader gets a very clear and lucid account of the Swamiji's contribution to the world of Indian philosophy. Swamiji pleaded for the demarcation of religion from sentimentality, ritual and custom. This is a very urgent need of our times, for today many atrocious customs and rituals are masquerading under the guise of religion. It is indeed quite true to say that Swami Vivekananda was the pioneer of the rationalist movement in modern India. But unfortunately, a movement so well begun has not gained momentum since the cancer of emotionalism and ritualism has gained too deep a root to be destroyed so easily. Belief in authority to the detriment of rational thinking, has become a fetish in our country and it is time that some attempt is made to revive the ardent rational approach to philosophical and religious problems so much advocated by Swami Vivekananda. To this effort the author's expounding of Swami Vivekananda's Philosophy will, I trust, act as a fillip.

It is indeed refreshing to read the author's account of Radhakrishnan's philosophy. Many have been the accounts that have come out in recent years about Radhakrishnan's philosophy. But easily Dr. Naravane's account can be considered as the most unbiased and objective estimate of Radhakrishnan's philosophy. It is usually maintained by the camp followers of Radhakrishnan, that he is one who would not tolerate a scientific approach to metaphysical problems. The author has shown very thoroughly that this is not the stand taken by Dr. Radhakrishnan in his philosophy (pp. 150-153). By appropriate and effective quotations from Dr. Radhakrishnan's own works, the author has drawn

a very interesting picture of Dr. Radhakrishnan both as a man and as a philosopher. When a great intelligence becomes tempered with philosophical acumen, we have men like Dr. Radhakrishnan.

On the whole the book provides very enjoyable and informative reading. Dr. Naravane is an adept in drawing word pictures and his easy command of the English language makes his writing a pleasure to read. Even the most difficult topics in religion and philosophy are clothed in a language which makes them attractive and creates a desire to make their acquaintance. This book is a '*must*' for all those who are interested in our culture and philosophy.

DR. (MRS.) SARASVATI CHENNAKESAVAN

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES. BY R. L. SINGH. Jore Ganesh Press Pvt. Ltd., Kathmandu. 1964. Pages 57. Price not mentioned.

The author of this booklet, who is the Press Secretary, Royal Palace, Nepal, makes a strong plea for the recognition and restoration of the deeper values of life—moral, intellectual, and spiritual—as the only way to avert a total disaster that threatens to overtake the present-day humanity. Most of the book consists of quotations from the writings of various authorities in the field of religion, mysticism, science, etc. The mottoes for the chapters are taken from the speeches of the King of Nepal, whose life is commended by the writer as 'one of the best practical interpretations of these fundamental values'.

M. P. PANDIT

ESSAYS IN MINIATURE. BY HARRY HEUSTED. Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y. 1965. Pages 52. Price \$2.75.

This is a collection of two hundred thoughts and parables purporting to explore life in its several fields of activity. Many features of social life in the West, especially in the United States, come in for pleasant banter, but nowhere do we find in these pages any observation or perception to set one thinking. The author seems to think that the mind, or the intellect, holds the key. He observes in one place: "There are men who make the mind their whole world; others make the body their entire world; each system has special merits, and each can be noble and good; however, I think that the planet of mind does orbit nearer the sun." Is mind, then, the highest faculty of man to reach the Truth?

M. P. PANDIT

WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT ENGLISH? BY U. A. ASRANI. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 14. 1964. Pages 48. Price 75 P.

This pamphlet purports to examine the issue posed in the title on a purely scientific basis. The present edition is the revised and enlarged version of the one that was published in 1962.

The scope of the brochure as indicated by the broad question, 'What shall we do about English?', is really much more comprehensive than what is dealt with by the author. The question actually taken up at length is about the right age at which the study of a foreign language could be commenced at the primary stage in a country like India. There is no doubt that the problem is of great practical significance and the relevant points that arise in this connexion need a close examination. Professor Asrani has brought to bear on this issue his study of the practices in vogue in several countries of the world in which foreign languages are taught and, on this basis, he seems to be convinced that the study of English in India should start not before the age of ten or eleven.

He is firmly opposed to English as the medium of instruction at any stage, on the ground that 'A foreign language as the medium of instruction lowers the intellectual grasp of subjects, produces split-mindedness, and alienates the educated classes from the bulk of the people' and 'The quality of education tends to deteriorate' (p. 46). Besides, the English language brings along with it the English culture as well and this the author fears may do some harm to our own customs and traditions and snap our comfortable moorings in the past.

What professes to be a scientific thesis turns out in fact to be an attempt to build up a pseudo-scientific anti-English brief of a lawyer who collects only that evidence which suits his own case. The other side is completely ignored. One could present the other viewpoint as well with the same force in the special historical circumstances in which the problem of English language has come to us as a legacy from the past. The case of the prosecution is presented by the author on what he calls a 'scientific basis', and that contention is true, if the prosecutor does not play the judge.

H. G. KULKARNI

SOLUTIONS OF ALL OUR PROBLEMS BY HUMANISM. BY JUGAL KISHORE DHANDHANIA. Dhandhanian & Sons, 203 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta 6. 1964. Pages 129. Price Rs. 10.

It appears that the author of this book was overtaken by a consuming passion, at an early stage of

his life, to know the truth about man. After fourteen years of study and research, we are told, certain 'Laws of Humanity' have been revealed to him and he proposes to share them with the readers. In his opinion, humanism is the sole panacea for all the ills of the world. And what is humanism? The writer describes it as a science laying down the laws of humanity and the laws in turn, are based on essential human qualities. The present volume (Books I and II) is devoted to an exposition of the writer's understanding of the subject. But the style adopted is hardly conducive to our understanding of his mind.

M. P. PANDIT

BENGALI

AVATĀRA-SANGINI. BY SWAMI DIVYATMA-NANDA. Mitra and Ghosh, 10, Shyamacharan Dey Street, Calcutta-12. 1965. (Bengali Year 1372). Pages 71. Price Rs. 2.

The book deals with the lives of six great women in Indian legend and history—Satī, the spouse of Śiva; Sītā, the spouse of Śrī Rāma; Rādhā, the spouse of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; Yaśodharā, the spouse of Lord Buddha; Viṣṇupriyā, the spouse of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; and Sarada Devi, the spouse of Sri Ramakrishna. Each chapter deals with one of these great women and begins with a black and white sketch.

Since the time immemorial the worship of the feminine spirit as Mother-Goddess has been the characteristic of our spiritual heritage. That woman representing fertility is the symbol of creation was accepted in all ancient civilizations. No society can hope to progress or prosper where women are not honoured and given due place. These six women of Hindu mythology and history represent the zenith of perfection in womanhood. Through suffering gladly borne, they helped their respective husbands, who were 'avatāras' (incarnations of God), to serve humanity as a whole. The love they had for their husbands was not the ordinary selfish or low type. It was ideal, self-sacrificing and noble and it helped them on to the path of spiritual progress for the service of humanity.

The author has done well to present before the reading public the lives and ideals of these six God-inspired and elevated women. In an age of selfishness and rank materialism there is greater necessity of such bright examples than ever before in history. We recommend the book to the public most enthusiastically.

DR. P. N. MUKHERJEE

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION BHUVANESWAR

REPORT FROM JANUARY 1960 TO MARCH 1965

Started by Swami Brahmananda personally in 1919 mainly as a centre for training the spiritual aspirants, this branch centre has now developed into one of the premier philanthropic institutions in the capital city of modern Orissa. The activities of the centre during the period under review were the following :

Spiritual and Cultural: Besides regular worship and prayer in the Āshrama Shrine, regular religious discourses and scriptural classes were also held in the Āshrama premises and in the different localities of the city. The birthday celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Brahmananda and the other prophets of religions like Buddha, Christ, and Śaṅkara were observed with due solemnity.

Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebration: The most important event during the period was the celebration of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda in this life-centre of Orissa. A competent Committee consisting of the eminent persons of the capital was formed for the purpose and an elaborate programme was drawn. The celebration was inaugurated on the 17 January, 1963 by Dr. A. N. Khosla, Governor of Orissa, through a solemn function at the Āshrama premises and this was followed by a largely attended public meeting in the afternoon presided over by Sri Biren Mitra, the then Chief Minister of the State and addressed by other men of eminence. Special *pūjā*, devotional songs, distribution of *prasād* to about five thousand people and a big procession going round the city were the other significant features to make the inauguration a success beyond measure.

Essay and elocution competitions on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda were organized for both the school and college going students throughout the State in Oriya, English, Hindi, Telegu and Bengali languages and in a meeting specially arranged for the occasion. Dr. P. Parija, the Vice-Chancellor of the Utkal University, gave away the prizes to the respective winners in competitions.

Exhibitions on the life of the great Swami were set up in the Āshrama premises and at Cuttack and public meetings were organized in different parts of the state.

To make the centenary ever memorable in the minds of the people, prominent roads of the city were marked after Swami Vivekananda; the road

in front of the Āshrama was renamed as 'Vivekananda Marg' and a statue of this great patriot-saint of modern India was installed in a notable place situated in the heart of the new capital. Moreover, a permanent fund was placed at the disposal of the Utkal University to arrange for annual extension lectures on the life and thought of Swami Vivekananda and a subject, 'The Life of Swami Vivekananda and His Teachings' was agreed to be introduced by the University as one of the subjects of Research.

The other outstanding achievement during the centenary was the translation of the sets of *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* into Oriya as well as their publication in ten volumes.

The concluding celebration of the centenary was marked by another largely attended public meeting on January 6, 1964 with Sri Morarji Desai, the noted Congress leader, in the Chair and by the feeding of about three thousand poor people.

Educational: The Free Primary School of the Mission, which had its humble beginning in 1933 made a steady improvement during the period. Total number of students as on 31 March, 1965 was 249 of which 87 were girls. One M. E. section with a roll strength of 54 students came to be added to it.

The Āshrama Library came to be converted into a Free Public Library with the name 'Vivekananda Free Library' and a Text Book section was added to it to help the poor students. The number of books during the period was 5,300 and the Reading Room received 8 dailies and 43 periodicals. The number of books issued during the period was 21,037.

A noteworthy progress was made during the period with regard to the various publications. Besides the publication of *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* in ten volumes into Oriya, others books which deserve particular mention are *Vivekananda charita*, *Swami Vivekananda*, *Pilanka Vivekananda* and *Karma-Yoga*. Fresh editions of some other ones were also brought out during the period.

Medical: The Allopathic Charitable Dispensary of the Centre proved to be of immense help to the poor people (of the surrounding area, and to the large numbers of pilgrims visiting Bhuvaneshwar. The number of patients treated during the period was 1,23,188 and the records of daily average attendance during these years were the following: 60 (1960-61), 50 (1961-62), 64 (1962-63), 80 (1963-64) and 76 (1964-65).